

THE ESSENTIAL SAKER IV



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MESSIANIC NARCISSISM'S AGONY BY A THOUSAND CUTS



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The Essential Saker IV

Messianic Narcissism's Agony by a Thousand Cuts

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Dedication

First, I dedicate this book to all those who were my only light when I was alone and defenseless: Sister X, Clara B., Sergei I., Archb. A, Met. C., Arch. C, Col. G, Gen. G, Caas D, Anne D: thank you for your faith in me and for proving to me that God never leaves us completely alone!

Second, this book is dedicated to my Russian family in Buenos-Aires: some have passed away while others are still alive – but I owe my happiest childhood memories to all of them: thank you for your kindness and love!

Third, I want to thank both Amarynth and Dalibor for making this (and my previous books) book possible! Without them this book would never have seen the light of day.

Finally, I dedicate this book to all the Good Samaritans who helped me when my so-called brothers turned their backs on me. When I hear these words: “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.” - I always think of you with an immense sense of gratitude. You are forever my brothers. Thank you!

I also dedicate this book to my prodigal son.



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About the Author

Biography – Andrei Raevski aka the blogger The Saker.

Andrei Raevski was born in Zurich, Switzerland. His father was Dutch 100% working class and his mother was from White Russian émigré nobility. His father left when he was 5, and he was raised by his mother and his Russian family. He took his mother's last name and later lived in Geneva. Military service followed in 1984 starting in electronic warfare and later military intelligence service (UNA) as a language specialist with some work with the Swiss Air Force.

For further studies he traveled to the USA for a BA in International Relations from the [School of International Service](#) (SIS) at the American University and a MA in Strategic Studies from the [Paul H. Nitze School for Advanced International Studies](#) (SAIS) at the Johns Hopkins University.

On returning to Switzerland, he worked as a civilian consultant for the Swiss Strategic Intelligence Service (SND) writing strategic analyses, primarily about the Soviet/Russian military. In the military, his rank was Major-equivalent as "Technical Officer", i.e., an analyst. He also worked as an "enemy operations" ("Red Team" in US parlance) specialist for the operational-level training of the General Staff of Swiss armed forces.

After that he worked at the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), specializing in peacekeeping tactics, disarmament and operations, an exceptionally challenging military environment. During this time he co-authored a book on Russian peacekeeping operations with Major-General I. N. Vorobèv of the Russian General Staff Academy. His final work at UNIDIR was about psychological operations and intelligence in peacekeeping which can be downloaded [here](#). At the same time he evaluated the performance of the Russian military during the first Chechen war for the Journal of Slavic Military Studies which has since been uploaded [here](#).

During the wars in Bosnia and Chechnia he saw Switzerland ditch its traditional "armed neutrality" and fully align itself to the Empire. He openly voiced his opposition on this betrayal of Swiss traditions which resulted in him being treated as a "dangerous element" by his former colleagues.

Attempting to provide aid to the Bosnian Serbs and regular contacts with Russian diplomats resulted in a complete blacklist and suddenly he became a “dangerous element” and labeled “disloyal” by former employers. This led him to abandon his career as a military specialist and he re-trained as a software engineer. When 9/11 crashed the IT sector, unemployment followed. Being completely blacklisted in Switzerland, and his wife’s qualifications not recognized, he and his family left for the USA. He home-schooled their 3 children (all now in college). Being fluent in Russian, French, English, Spanish and German, he worked as a freelance translator while his wife practiced as a veterinarian. He is still comfortable with the designation ‘legal alien’ and describes the situation as follows: “I live in the US as Snowden lives in Russia, not because it is better, but because we are not persecuted.”

“Vineyard Saker” also known as The Saker Blog was born in 2007 as an anonymous blog intended to be personal psychotherapy. He wanted to write when he wanted to, what he wanted to, and never touch another formal analysis in his life. (“Vineyard Saker” is a simple machine-generated anagram of his full name). He also studied Hezbollah specifically and the Middle East. People soon found The Saker Blog and during the deep crisis in the Ukraine, he found himself back into formal analysis presented informally. People flocked to the blog as there was no credible or reliable information available to the discerning reader. While he could not speak freely or honestly during the war in Bosnia and Chechnia, he had the opportunity during the Ukrainian crisis through dissemination of credible and reliable and most of all, honest analysis. The blog grew with guest writers and with sister blogs in other parts of the world and he still analyzes geo-political affairs now 13 years later with 100% open source information. Through the years, 3 books were collated with blog content prepared for print, ebooks and pdf manuscripts and the 4th one is in process.

As the kids grew up and needed less hands-on attention, he joined his wife full time in her work and completed a graduate degree in Orthodox Theological Studies in 2016.

Today, he rejects the Left-Right reference system and considers himself as an Orthodox “People’s Monarchist” (народный монархист) in the tradition of [Lev Tikhomirov](#), Feodor Dostoevsky, [Ivan Solonevich](#) and [Ivan Ilyin](#). Just like the Russian philosopher [Berdaev](#), rather than looking left or right, he would rather look *up*! He is “Left of labor, Right of values” (*Gauche du travail, droite des valeurs*) as expressed by

Alain Soral. Economically he generally prefers laissez-faire capitalism for the family and small business level, socialism for the corporation level and communism for strategic/national level sectors of the economy, as the best workable systems.

The Saker blog is 100% reader supported and although he hopes that one day Putin will pay him a stipend, this has not happened yet. Neither is he on any other party's payroll.

He and his wife and family are people who enjoy life. He is described by male friends as "A man after my own heart" and on hiking trips can easily be found rescuing a baby alligator, observing a rattle snake or fighting quicksand so that he does not lose his beloved and very well used hiking boots. "Very easy", he tells the story. "You just sit down, turn 180 degrees, and wiggle out – But Hold on to your Boots!" He easily discusses a wide range of topics, music, religion, politics or drugs, with frankness and humor. This is supported by deep Christian Orthodox roots and always seeking and studying the true path in his chosen religious practice, in which he remains a student.

Today, after an interesting career, he says that what he must be judged on, is his books and his blog. The past is past, the present is here and his current words express what he is and what he has become. "Study my writings and you will know who I am."

For extra-curricular activities, he hikes, kayaks if there is an opportunity and plays acoustic jazz guitar.

Forword by Allen Yu

We live in chaotic, troubled times. Though the world is currently in a “time of peace”, sponsored *Color Revolutions* and civil wars have been unleashed upon un-“likeminded” nations - devastation regions from Ukraine to Egypt to Iraq to Syria to Hong Kong. Economic sanctions have been deployed against economies from N. Korea to Turkey to Iran to Venezuela.

We live in a time of great paradoxes. Even as a wide swath of humanity has managed to achieve great strides in their living standards the past decade or so, the world continues to suffer much from the suffocation and oppression of a U.S.-led global hegemony.

How can it be that a great, sovereign nation such as Germany, with one of the most advanced economies in the world can be demeaned, denigrated and threatened with sanctions immediately after they worked out a deal with neighboring Russia to build a natural gas pipeline between them; a deal that no one disputes and that makes perfect economic and environmental sense for Europe as well as Russia?

How can it be that in early 2020, after ordering the cold-blooded murder of the widely revered Iranian military leader Soleimani, America’s president can get away with declaring, with millions still in shock and in mourning: “We took action last night to stop a war. We did not take action to start a war.” “We are a peace-loving nation and my administration remains firmly committed to establishing peace and harmony among the nations in the world.”

How did we arrive in this state of affairs? Is there a way out of all this madness?

The questions are not the idle musings of armchair critics. These are essential questions we all – as citizens of the world – must answer.

Wars do not start in a vacuum. A world awash in misinformation and disinformation is a world draped on a tinderbox.

I first started blogging in 2008 when, during the lead-up to the Beijing Olympics several of us Chinese patriots gathered together to blog about the gross disinformation and misinformation the Western media were blaring at China. Story after story we saw how the media distorted the real China by telling only one side of the story, without proper context, and being always on the prowl to make the most heinous

attacks and most venomous presumptions. So I am not a stranger to media disinformation and misinformation.

But the level of hate, bias and purposeful disinformation I see today in the West is of a level I could not have imagined just a decade ago.

The term “fake news” has come to common parlance in the world the last few years. But the problem is much deeper. “Fake News” today pervades every level of Western society, every institution, every political party, every organization, every college, every school, every classroom. And like a virus, the problem has also spread worldwide.

I first learned of the “Fifth Column” from the Saker. Most of the time, he was talking about Russia and nearby regions. But I see the “Fifth Column” everywhere in the world now. They are deeply embedded in Taiwan and Hong Kong, across much of Asia, in the Middle East, in Africa, in Latin America.

The way the U.S. has used economic sanctions, forward projecting bases and navy, and technological superiority to hold the rest of the world hostage cannot last. The world will be reborn. I have no doubt about it. To what form it will become – to what extent humanity can escape from today’s bondage – remains to be seen.

But the genesis of that future world starts today. The foundation of our future lays in the many important discussions that righteous and sentient people like the Saker are leading. I highly recommend Saker’s blog and books for that purpose: to help you see through the filth and the decadence of today; to uplift you to see what can be possible; and perhaps to inspire you to become more aware and to help make way for a more inclusive, common, shared future together.

Always insightful, sharp and unafraid, the Saker will make you a better thinker, better observer, and maybe even a better person. The Chinese have a saying about studying that goes something like this: Learning is like sailing against the current: a boat must forge ahead or it will be swept downstream.

Being complacent in this world is not an option. With the Saker on your side, you have a trusted guide. Go ahead. Jump in and forge ahead!

Allen Yu

Forword by Dan Petrovich

Readers and admirers of The Saker span the globe. Comprised of many different races, religions, ethnicities and political persuasions; brought together by the courage and genuine goodness of The Saker, we are united in our desire for a better world and to expose the evil which subjugates humanity. The Saker's peers have declared him to be "the single most insightful commentator on world affairs". While we marvel at the scope of his knowledge, sharp intellect and impartiality, it is his uncompromising virtue and prescient analyses that set him above the rest.

It is my great honor, to be among the voices included in The Saker IV . I only fear that I will not be able to adequately express the gratitude and true love Serbian people feel towards the Saker. Along with many other nations, unjustly vilified and ravaged by the evil empire, the Saker has bravely given voice to the plight of the Serbian Nation.

Like the Saker, my "awakening" came as a result of the Anglo-Zionist empire's attack on Serbia. Being born a US. citizen of Serbian descent (Refugees from Tito's Yugoslavia), the realization of living in a nightmarish dystopian world became clear to me in high school, when Jesuit priests and Jewish progressives alike started accosting me in the hallways of high school. Both groups wanted me to know that Serbs are evil Nazis and I should be ashamed of my Serbian heritage. My only shame is to admit that these assaults shook me to my core.

How could men of God, whose own religious order was directly responsible for the atrocities committed by their most ardent Catholic Nazis, the croats, dare to utter such fallacies? And how could these Jewish friends, whose fellow Jews were saved by the Serbs and exterminated alongside Serbs, in Croatian death camps, be calling Serb Nazis? The Serbs were the first to rise up in all of occupied Europe. Why would our allies purposely hide the WWII genocide of over a million Serbs? It was only years later that I learned that to the empire, Serbs and Russians are one people. To eventually destroy Russia, Serbia must be eliminated.

I was first introduced to the Saker's brilliant analyses during the Empire's attack on the people of Eastern Ukraine. Who was this guy telling all this truth? He speaks of Justice and the power of God's spirit. More false hope? It was only after reading about the Submarine in the desert, did I realize there were still truly brave and brilliant people, who wouldn't sacrifice their morality for the all the wealth in the Empire. It

was then, when I knew found my spiritual brother. Saker, you inspire us to believe Goodness will prevail.

Among the wonderful compilations of essays, included in The Saker IV, is an incredibly accurate account of Draza Mihailovich, the "forgotten" hero of WWII, titled "*Draza Mihailovich: the man upon whom the future Serbia will be built!*" Along with the Saker's signature prescience, it is an amazingly accurate retelling of the empire's betrayal and destruction of Serbia over the last 100 years. Before the war to demonize and destroy Serbia, Serbia was known as "the country of heroes". The article mentions that Draza was just the latest incarnation of a long line of heroes from tiny Serbia. Well, my dear Saker, you don't just talk about the bravery of Serbian Patriots, you honor them with every courageous and inspiring word you write:

*"In a world ruled and even defined by hypocrisy, betrayal, cowardice and, above all, lies, Kosovo cannot be liberated. I would say that we, all of us, won't *deserve* a free Kosovo as long as we allow evil to rule the world as it does today. But I also know that lies, or even death, cannot defeat the Truth and that Kosovo shall be liberated." -*

The Saker "Kosovo will be liberated" 2017

Dan Petrovich

From 2018 to 2019 – a quick survey of a few trends

January 03, 2019

The year 2018 will go down in history as a turning point in the evolution of the geostrategic environment of our planet. There are many reasons for that and I won't list them all, but here are some of the ones which I personally consider the most important ones:

The Empire blinked. Several times.

This is probably the single most important development of the year: the AngloZionist Empire issued all sorts of scary threats, and took some even scarier actual steps, but eventually it had to back down. In fact, the Empire is in retreat on many fronts, but I will only list a few crucial ones:

1. The DPRK: remember all the grandiose threats made by Trump and his Neocon handlers? The Administration went as far as announcing that it would send as many as [THREE\(!\) nuclear aircraft carrier strike groups to the waters off the DRPK](#) while Trump threatened to [“totally destroy” North Korea](#). Eventually, the South Koreans decided to take matters in their own hands, they opened a direct channel of communications with the North, and all the US sabre-rattling turned into nothing more than hot air.
2. Syria in April: that was the time when the US, France and the UK decided to attack Syria with cruise missiles to “punish” the Syrians for allegedly using chemical weapons (a theory too stupid to be even worth discussing). [Of 103 detected missiles, 71 were shot down by the Syrians](#). The White House and the Pentagon, along with their trusted Ziomeia, declared the strike a great success, but then, they also did that during the invasion of Grenada (one of the worst assault operations in military history) or after the humiliating defeat of Israel by Hezbollah in 2006, so this really means very little. The truth is that this operation was a total military failure and that it has not been followed up by anything (at least for now).
3. The Ukraine: we spend almost all of 2018 waiting for an Ukronazi attack on the Donbass which never happened. Now, I am quite sure that some will argue that the Nazi junta in Kiev never had any such intentions, but anybody with

even a basic knowledge of what took place in the Ukraine this year knows that this is pure bull: the junta did pretty much everything to execute an attack except the very last step: to actually order it. Putin's open threat that any such attack would have "*grave consequences for Ukraine's statehood as such*" probably played a key role in deterring the Empire. Oh sure, the Ukronazis might well attack in January or any time after that, but the fact is that in 2018 they did not dare do so. Yet again, the Empire (and its minions) had to back down.

4. Syria in September: this time, it was the Israeli hypostasis of the Empire which triggered a massive crisis when the Israelis hid their strike aircraft behind a Russian Il-20 large turboprop airliner resulting in the loss of the aircraft and crew. After giving the Israelis a chance to come clean (which, predictably, they didn't – they are, after all, Israelis), the Russians got fed up and delivered advanced air defense, electronic warfare and battle management systems to the Syrians. In response the Israelis (who had issued many threats about immediately destroying any S-300 delivered to the Syrians) had to basically stop their air strikes against Syria (well, not quite, they did execute two such strikes: one totally ineffective one and one in which the Zionist crazies again hid behind an aircraft, but in this case, no one [but TWO civilian aircraft](#) (more about this latest ziocrazy stunt further below). The Empire backed down again.

5. Syria in December: apparently fed up with all the infighting amongst his advisors, Trump eventually ordered a full US withdrawal from Syria. Now, of course, since this is the USA, we have to wait and see what actually happens. There is also a very complex kabuki dance being executed by Russia, Turkey, the US, Israel, Iran, the Kurds and the Syrians to stabilize the situation following a full US withdrawal. After all the years of huffing and puffing about how "Assad The Monster must go" it is quite amusing to see how the western powers are throwing in towels one after the other. This also begs the obvious question: if "The City On The Hill And Sole Superpower On The Planet, The Leader Of The Free World and the Indispensable Nation" can't even deal with a weakened Syrian government and military, what can this military successfully do (besides provide Hollywood blockbusters to a gullible US public)?

6. Various smaller defeats: too many to count, but they include the Khashoggi fiasco, the failure of the war in Yemen, the failure of the war in Afghanistan, the failure of the war in Iraq, the failure to remove Maduro from power in Venezuela, and the gradual loss of control over an increasing number

of EU countries (Italy), Nikki Haley's ridiculous antics at the UNSC, the inability to gather up the intellectual resources needed to have a real, productive, meeting with Vladimir Putin, the disastrous commercial war with China, etc. What all these events have in common is that they are a result of the inability of the US to get anything done, truly done. Far from being a real superpower, the USA is in a full-spectrum decline and the main thing that still gives it its superpower status are its nuclear weapons, just like Russia in the 1990s.

All the internal problems resulting from the infighting of the US elites (roughly: the Clinton gang vs Trump and his Deplorables) only make things worse. Just the apparently never ending sequence of resignations and/or firings from the Trump Administration is a very important sign of the advanced state of collapse of the US polity. Elites don't fight each other when all goes well, they do so when everything goes south. The saying "*victory has many fathers but defeat is an orphan*" reminds us that when a gang of thugs begins to lose control of a situation, it rapidly turns into an "every man for himself", everybody blames everybody for the problems and nobody wants to stay anywhere near those who will go down in history as the pathetic losers who screwed everything up.

As for the US armed forces, they have been tremendously successful in killing a very large amount of people, as always, mostly civilians, but they failed to get anything actually done, at least not if one understands that the purpose of war is not just to kill people, but is the "*continuation of politics by other means*". Let's compare and contrast what Russia and the US did in Syria.

On October 11th, [Putin declared the following in an interview with Vladimir Soloviev on the TV channel Russia 1](#): "*Our objective is to stabilize the legitimate authority and create conditions for a political compromise*". That's it. He did not say that Russia would single-handedly change the course of the war, much less win the war. The (**very small!**) Russian task force in Syria achieved these original objectives in **just a few months**, something which the Axis-of-Kindness could not achieve in years (and the Russians did that with a small fraction of the military capabilities available to the US/NATO/EU/CENTCOM/Israel in the region. In fact, the Russians even had to quickly create a resupply system which they did not have because of the purely defensive Russian military posture (Russian power projection is mostly limited under 500-1000km from the Russian border).

In comparison, the USA has been fighting a so-called GWOT (Global War on Terror) since 2001 and all it can show is that the terrorists (of various demonstrations) only got stronger, took control of more land, murdered more people, and generally seemed to show a remarkable ability to survive and even grow in spite of (or thanks to) the GWOT. As Putin would say, what would you expect from “*people who don't know the difference between Austria and Australia*“?

Personally, I would expect them to take full credit for the victory and leave.

Which is exactly what the USA has done.

At least that is what they are saying now. This could change 180 degrees again.

As for Afghanistan, the USA spent more time there than the Soviets did. ***Does that not strongly suggest that the US leaders are *even more* incompetent than the “stagnation” era Soviet gerontocrats?***

The failure to subdue or even contain Russia

Putin's [speech on March 1st to the Russian Federal Assembly](#) was truly an historical moment: for the first time since the Empire decided to wage war on Russia (a war which is roughly 80% informational, 15% economic and only 5% kinetic but which can turn 95% kinetic in an hour or so!) the Russians decided to openly warn the USA that their strategy has been comprehensively defeated. You think that this is hyperbole? Think again. What is US military power based on? What are its main components?

- Airpower (air supremacy)
- Long-range standoff weapons (ballistic and air-breathing)
- Aircraft carriers
- Anti-missile defense (at least in theory!)
- 800-1000 (depends on how you count) bases worldwide

The deployment of what are without any doubt the most sophisticated air-defense systems in the world supported by what are also probably the most formidable electronic warfare (EW) capabilities currently in existence have now created what the US/NATO commanders refer to as “Russia's anti-access/area denial (A2/AD)” capability which, as these US/NATO commanders say, can pop-up over the Baltic Sea, over the Eastern Mediterranean, the Ukraine, Syria and elsewhere (might show up on

the [La Orchila island in Venezuela](#) in 2019). Furthermore, in qualitative terms Russian tactical airpower is newer and at least equal, if not superior, to anything in US or NATO tactical aircraft holdings. While the West in general, and especially the USA, have a much larger number of aircraft, they are mostly of the older generations, and various encounters between Russian and US multi-role aircraft in the Syrian skies have shown that US pilots prefer to leave when a Russian Su-35S show up.

The deployment (already in 2018!) of the *Kinzhal* hypersonic missile has basically [made the entire US surface fleet useless for an attack against Russia](#). Be it the aircraft carriers or even various destroyers, cruisers, amphibious assault ships, (mostly ill-fated) littoral combat ships, transport ships, etc. – they are now all sitting ducks which the Russians can blow out of the water irrespective of any air-defenses these ships, or their escorts, might have.

Likewise, the deployment of the super-heavy thermonuclear armed intercontinental ballistic like the [Sarmat](#) and the [Avangard](#) hypersonic glide vehicle have made all of the US anti-ballistic missile efforts completely useless. Let me repeat this: ALL of the US ABM efforts, including the billions spent on research and development, have now been rendered completely useless.

*[Sidebar: it is important to clarify something here: **none of the new Russian weapon systems provide any means to protect Russia from a US nuclear (or conventional) strike.** “All” they do is to make darn sure that the US leaders are never under the illusion they have been pursuing since Reagan’s “Star Wars”, i.e. that they could somehow escape a Russian 2nd-strike (counter-strike) retaliatory capability if it decided to strike Russia. In truth, even without the Sarmat or the Avanguard, Russia already had more than enough missiles (land, air and sea based) to wipe-out the USA in case of a retaliatory counter-strike, but the US politicians and force planners began pursuing this pipe-dream of anti-ballistic missile defense in spite of the fact that it was rather clear that such a system could not work (a few “[leakers](#)” might be acceptable with conventional weapons, but a few “nuclear leakers” are more than enough to extract a terrible price from any attacker delusional enough to think that a 90% or even 98% effective “shield” is enough of a protection to risk attacking a nuclear superpower). So you could say that these new Russian capabilities (including the short(er) range Iskander tactical missiles) are a type of “delusion destroyer” or a “reality reminder”*

which will burst the bubble of US illusions about the risks of a war against Russia. Hopefully, they will never have any other use.]

Finally, the deployment of a new generation of [advanced and very long range standoff missiles by Russia](#) has given Russia the huge “reach” advantage of being able to strike any US target (be it a military force or a base) worldwide, including in the United States (which is now almost never mentioned in the western media).

Now ***take a look at the list of key components of US military power above and see that it has all been transformed into, basically, junk.***

What we have here is a classical situation in which, on one side, one country’s force planners made fundamental, strategic miscalculations which directly defined what kind of military force the country would have for at least two, possibly three, decades, while, on the other side, the force planners made the correct decisions which allowed them to defeat a military force whose military budget is roughly ten times bigger. The most severe consequence of this state of affairs for the USA is that it will now take, at the very least a decade (or more!) to reformulate a new force planning strategy (modern weapons systems sometimes take decades to design, develop and deploy). The ill-fated Zumwalt, the F-35, the Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) aircraft carrier – these are all obscene examples on how to spend billions of dollars and be left with major weapon systems disasters which only further weaken the US armed forces.

There is a simple reason why the USA became a superpower in the 20th century. Not only was the US mainland protected by huge oceans, all of WWI and WWII were fought far away from the USA. All the potential competitors of the USA had their national economies completely destroyed while the USA did not even lose a single factory or research/design bureau. Then the USA could use its immense industrial power-base to basically provide a world-wide market with goods which only the USA could build and deliver. And yet, in spite of such huge advantages, the US spent almost all its history beating up one defenseless country after another to ensure full submission and compliance with the demands of Uncle Shmuel (the AngloZionist variant of Uncle Sam). So much for being “indispensable” I suppose...

Thanks to the globalists, the US industrial base is gone. Thanks to the Neocons and their arrogance, the US is in one form of conflict or another with most of the key countries on the planet (especially if we ignore the existence of US-supported and run *comprador* elites). The infinitely dumb and self-defeating submission of the US to

Israel has now resulted in a situation where [the USA is losing control of the oil-rich Middle-East](#) it used to run for decades. Finally, by choosing to try to submit both Russia and China to the will of the Empire, the Neocons have succeeded in pushing these two countries into a de-facto alliance (really a symbiotic relationship) which, far from isolating them, isolates the USA from “where it is happening” in terms of economic, social and political developments (first and foremost, the Eurasian landmass and the OBOR project).

2019 prospects for the Empire: problems, problems and even more problems

Well, 2018 was an exceptionally nasty and dangerous year, but 2019 could prove even more dangerous for the following reasons:

- Unless the USA changes political course and gives up on the suicidal russophobia of Obama and Trump, a military confrontation between Russia and the USA is inevitable. Russia has retreated as far as she possibly can, there is nowhere else to retreat to and she therefore won't. There is no doubt in my mind whatsoever that if the US had actually targeted Russian units in Syria (which, apparently, Bolton wanted to but Mattis, apparently, categorically rejected), the Russians would have counter-attacked not only against the US missiles, but also against their carriers (especially ships). I have it from a trusted source that on the night of the attack, the Russian MiG-31K with the *Kinzhal* missile were in the air ready to strike. Thank God (and, possibly, thank Mattis) this did not happen. But as I said in my article [“Every click brings us closer to a bang!”](#) each time WWII does *not* happen following a US strike on Syria this emboldens the Neocons to try yet once more, especially since “Assad The Monster Must Go” remains in power in Damascus while one after the one each western politician which decreed that Assad must go, goes himself.
- It is pretty obvious that Israel has gone absolutely, terminally and, possibly, suicidally insane. Their little stunt with the Russian Il-20 was already a disaster of immense proportions which, in a normal country, would have resulted in the immediate resignation of the entire Cabinet. But not in Israel. After hiding behind a Russian military turboprop, they now decided to hide from the Syrian S-300 by hiding behind *two* civilian aircraft! See for yourself:

<https://youtu.be/8ld0IzhMWw>

- I don't think that it is worth pondering here that Israel is the last openly racist state on the planet, or that the Israeli leaders are evil, immoral, insane and generally batshit crazy maniacs. That you either understood for yourself or you are hopeless. What is important here is not how evil the Israelis are, but how stupid and totally reckless they are. Simply put, this is how this works: the Israelis are evil, stupid and completely delusional, but they own every single US politician which means that no matter how insane and egregious the actions of the Israelis might be, the "indispensable nation" will *always* cover them and, when needed, cover-up for them (*cf.* USS Liberty or, for that matter, 9/11). Right now there is nobody in the US political class with any chance of being elected who would dare to do anything other than automatically worship anything Israeli (or Jewish, for that matter). The real motto of the USA is not "In God we trust", but "there is no light between the U.S. and Israel" (yet another reason why the USA is not a real superpower: it is not even really sovereign!).
- The Empire has some major problems in Europe. First, should the Ukronazi *protégés* of the USA ever find the courage (or despair) to attack the Donbass or Russia, the resulting chaos will flood the EU with even more refugees, many of whom will be most unsavory and outright dangerous characters. Furthermore, the anti-EU feelings are becoming very strong in Italy, Hungary and, for different reasons, even Poland. France is on the edge of a civil war (not this time around; my feeling is that the [Gilets Jaunes](#) will eventually run out of steam; but the next time around, which will happen sooner rather than later, the explosion will probably result in the overthrow of the French [CRIF](#)-run regime and a massive anti-US backlash).
- In Latin America, the Empire has been massively successful in overthrowing a series of patriotic, independent, leaders. But what is missing now is the ability to make these pro-US regimes successful by being economically or politically viable. Amazingly, and in spite of both a massive subversion campaign by the USA and major political mistakes, the Maduro Administration has remained in power in Venezuela and is slowly but very resolutely trying to change course and keep Venezuela sovereign and independent from the USA. The key problem of the USA in Latin American is that the USA has always ruled by using a local *comprador* elite. The USA has been very successful in this effort. But the USA has never succeeded in

convincing the Latin American masses of people of its benevolence and this is why the word “Yankee” remains a slur in every Latin American country.

- In Asia, China is offering every US colony an alternative civilizational model which is becoming increasingly attractive, as the PRC is becoming more economically powerful and economically successful. It turns out that the usual mix of arrogance, hubris and ignorance which allowed the Anglo countries to dominate Asia is now losing its power and that the people of Asia are looking for alternatives. Truth be told – the USA has absolutely nothing to offer.

The bottom line is this: not only is the USA unable to impose its will on countries which are considered “US allies” (if the NorthStream ever happens – and I think that it will – then this will mark the first time that EU leaders told the US President to get lost, if not in so many words), but the USA obviously lacks any kind of project to offer to other countries. Yes, “MAGA” is all fine and dandy, but it does not have much traction with other countries who really don’t care about MAGA...

Conclusion in the form of a Russian saying

There is a saying in Russian “*better to have an horrible end (than to have to live through) a horror with no end*” (лучше ужасный конец чем ужас без конца). There is very little doubt that the decline of the AngloZionist Empire will continue in 2019. What will not change, however, is the ability of the USA to destroy Russia in a nuclear attack. Because, make no mistake, all that the new fancy Russian weapons provide is the capability to punish (retaliate against) the USA for an attack on Russia, but not the capability to deny (prevent) such an attack. If the Neocons decide that a nuclear holocaust is preferable to a loss of power in the USA, then there is nothing anybody can do to prevent them from playing out their own, sordid, version of [Götterdämmerung](#). I have recently had to spend a few days in Boca Raton, were a lot of that new US “aristocracy” likes to spend time and I can tell you two things: life is good for them, and they sure ain’t giving up their privileged status as “leaders of the planet”. And if somebody tries to take it away, there is no doubt in my mind that these people will react with a vicious outburst of Samson-like despair-filled rage. So the only question remains is this: will we (mankind) be able to take away the nuclear button from this class of parasites without giving them the chance to press it or not?

I don’t know.

So, will it be a horrible end or a horror with no end?

I don't know either.

But what I know is that the Empire is cracking at all its seams and that its decline will only accelerate in 2019.

The Saker

Placing the USA on a collapse continuum with Dmitry Orlov

January 11, 2019

The West is rotting!

Yes, maybe, but what a nice smell...

Old Soviet joke

The word ‘[catastrophe](#)’ has several meanings, but in its original meaning in Greek the word means a “sudden downturn” ([in Greek](#) *katastrophē* ‘overturning, sudden turn,’ from *kata-* ‘down’ + *strophē* ‘turning’). As for the word “superpower” it also has several possible definitions, but my preferred one is [this one](#) “*Superpower is a term used to describe a State with a dominant position, which is characterized by its **extensive ability to exert influence or project power on a global scale. This is done through the combined-means of economic, military, technological and cultural strength, as well as diplomatic and soft power influence. Traditionally, superpowers are preeminent among the great powers***”, or [this one](#), “*an extremely powerful nation, especially one capable of **influencing international events and the acts and policies of less powerful nations***”, or [this one](#) “*an international governing body able to **enforce its will upon the most powerful states***“.

I have mentioned the very visible decline of the USA and its associated Empire in many of my articles already, so I won’t repeat it here other than to say that the “ability to exert influence and impose its will” is probably the best criteria to measure the magnitude of the fall of the USA since Trump came to power (the process was already started by Dubya and Obama, but it sure accelerated with The Donald). But I do want to use a metaphor to revisit the concept of catastrophe.

If you place an object in the middle of a table and then push it right to the edge, you will exert some amount of energy we can call “E1”. Then, if the edge of the table is smooth and you just push the object over the edge, you exercise a much smaller amount of energy we can call “E2”. And, in most cases (if the table is big enough), you will also find that E1 is much bigger than E2 yet E2, coming after E1 took place, triggered a much more dramatic event: instead of smoothly gliding over the table top, the object suddenly falls down and shatters. That sudden fall can also be called a “catastrophe”. This is also something which happens in history, take the example of the Soviet Union.

Some readers might recall how Alexander Solzhenitsyn repeatedly declared in the 1980s that he was sure that the Soviet regime would collapse and that he would return to Russia. He was, of course, vitriolically ridiculed by all the “specialists” and “experts”. After all, why would anybody want to listen to some weird Russian exile with politically suspicious ideas (there were rumors of “monarchism” and “anti-Semitism”) when the Soviet Union was an immense superpower, armed to the teeth with weapons, with an immense security service, with political allies and supporters worldwide? Not only that, but all the “respectable” specialists and experts were unanimous that, while the Soviet regime had various problems, it was very far from collapse. The notion that NATO would soon replace the Soviet military not only in eastern Europe, but even in part of the Soviet Union was absolutely unthinkable. And yet it all happened, very, very fast. I would argue that the Soviet union completely collapsed in the span of less than 4 short years: 1990-1993. How and why this happened is beyond the scope of this article, but what is undeniable is that in 1989 the Soviet Union was still an apparently powerful entity, while by the end of 1993, it was gone (smashed into pieces by the very *nomenklatura* which used to rule over it). How did almost everybody miss that?

Because ideologically-poisoned analysis leads to intellectual complacency, a failure of imagination and, generally, an almost total inability to even hypothetically look at possible outcomes. This is how almost all the “Soviet specialists” got it wrong (the KGB, by the way, had predicted this outcome and warned the Politburo, but the Soviet gerontocrats were ideologically paralyzed and were both unable, and often unwilling, to take any preventative action). The Kerensky masonic regime in 1917 Russia, the monarchy in Iran or the Apartheid regime in South Africa also collapsed very fast once the self-destruction mechanism was in place and launched.

You can think of that “regime self-destruction mechanism” as our E1 phase in our metaphor above. As for E2, you can think of it as whatever small-push like event which precipitates the quick and final collapse, apparently with great ease and minimum energy spent.

At this point it is important to explain what exactly a “final collapse” looks like. Some people are under the very mistaken assumption that a collapsed society or country looks like a Mad Max world. This is not so. The Ukraine has been a failed state for several years already, but it still exists on the map. People live there, work, most people still have electricity (albeit not 24/7), a government exists, and, at least

officially, law and order is maintained. This kind of collapsed society can go on for years, maybe decades, but it is in a state of collapse nonetheless, as it has reached all the 5 Stages of Collapse as defined by Dmitry Orlov in his seminal book "[The Five Stages of Collapse: Survivors' Toolkit](#)" where he mentions the following 5 stages of collapse:

- Stage 1: Financial collapse. Faith in "business as usual" is lost.
- Stage 2: Commercial collapse. Faith that "the market shall provide" is lost.
- Stage 3: Political collapse. Faith that "the government will take care of you" is lost.
- Stage 4: Social collapse. Faith that "your people will take care of you" is lost.
- Stage 5: Cultural collapse. Faith in "the goodness of humanity" is lost.

Having personally visited Argentina in the 1970s and 1980s, and seen the Russia of the early 1990s, I can attest that a society can completely collapse while maintaining a lot of the external appearances of a normal still functioning society. Unlike the Titanic, most collapsed regimes don't fully sink. They remain about half under water, and half above, possibly with an orchestra still playing joyful music. And in the most expensive top deck cabins, a pretty luxurious lifestyle can be maintained by the elites. But for most of the passengers such a collapse results in poverty, insecurity, political instability and a huge loss in welfare. Furthermore, in terms of motion, a half-sunk ship is no ship at all.

Here is the crucial thing: as long as the ship's PA systems keep announcing great weather and buffet brunches, and as long as most of the passengers remain in their cabins and watch TV instead of looking out of the window, the illusion of normalcy can be maintained for a fairly long while, even after a collapse. During the E1 phase outlined above, most passengers will be kept in total ignorance (lest they riot or protest) and only when E2 strikes (totally unexpectedly for most passengers) does reality eventually destroy the ignorance and illusions of the brainwashed passengers.

I have lived in the USA from 1986-1991 and from 2002 to today and there is no doubt in my mind whatsoever that the country has undergone a *huge* decline over the past decades. In fact, I would argue that the USA has been living under E1 condition since at least Dubya and that this process dramatically accelerated under Obama and Trump. I believe that we reached the E2 "edge of the table" moment in 2018 and that from now on even a relatively minor incident can result in a sudden downturn (i.e. a

“catastrophe”). Still, I decided to check with the undisputed specialist of this issue and so I emailed Dmitry Orlov and asked him the following question:

In your recent article “[The Year the Planet Flipped Over](#)” you paint a devastating picture of the state of the Empire:

It is already safe to declare Trump’s plan to Make America Great Again (MAGA) a failure. Beneath the rosy statistics of US economic growth hides the hideous fact that it is the result of a tax holiday granted to transnational corporations to entice them to repatriate their profits. While this hasn’t helped them (their stocks are currently cratering) it has been a disaster for the US government as well as for the economic system as whole. Tax receipts have shrunk. The budget deficit for 2018 exceeds \$779 billion. Meanwhile, the trade wars which Trump initiated have caused the trade deficit to increase by 17% from the year before. Plans to repatriate industrial production from low-cost countries remain vaporous because the three key elements which China had as it industrialized (cheap energy, cheap labor and low cost of doing business) are altogether missing. Government debt is already beyond reasonable and its expansion is still accelerating, with just the interest payments set to exceed half a trillion a year within a decade. This trajectory does not bode well for the continued existence of the United States as a going concern. Nobody, either in the United States or beyond, has the power to significantly alter this trajectory. Trump’s thrashing about may have moved things along faster than they otherwise would have, at least in the sense of helping convince the entire world that the US is selfish, feckless, ultimately self-destructive and generally unreliable as a partner. In the end it won’t matter who was president of the US—it never has. Among those the US president has succeeded in hurting most are his European allies. His attacks on Russian energy exports to Europe, on European car manufacturers and on Europe’s trade with Iran have caused a fair amount of damage, both political and economic, without compensating for it with any perceived or actual benefits. Meanwhile, as the globalist world order, which much of Europe’s population appears ready to declare a failure, begins to unravel, the European Union is rapidly becoming ungovernable, with established political parties unable to form coalitions with ever-more-numerous populist upstarts. It is too early to say that the EU has already failed altogether, but it already seems safe to predict that within a decade it will no longer remain as a serious international factor. Although the

disastrous quality and the ruinous mistakes of Europe's own leadership deserve a lot of the blame, some of it should rest with the erratic, destructive behavior of their transoceanic Big Brother. The EU has already morphed into a strictly regional affair, unable to project power or entertain any global geopolitical ambitions. Same goes for Washington, which is going to either depart voluntarily (due to lack of funds) or get chased out from much of the world. The departure from Syria is inevitable whether Trump, under relentless pressure from his bipartisan warmongers, backtracks on this commitment or not. Now that Syria has been armed with Russia's up-to-date air defense weapons the US no longer maintains air superiority there, and without air superiority the US military is unable to do anything. Afghanistan is next. There, it seems outlandish to think that the Washingtonians will be able to achieve any sort of reasonable accommodation with the Taliban. Their departure will spell the end of Kabul as a center of corruption where foreigners steal humanitarian aid and other resources. Somewhere along the way the remaining US troops will also be pulled out of Iraq, where the parliament, angered by Trump's impromptu visit to a US base, recently voted to expel them. And that will put paid to the entire US adventure in the Middle East since 9/11: \$4,704,439,588,308 has been squandered, to be precise, or \$14,444 for every man, woman and child in the US. The biggest winners in all of this are, obviously, the people of the entire region, because they will no longer be subjected to indiscriminate US harassment and bombardment, followed by Russia, China and Iran, with Russia solidifying its position as the ultimate arbiter of international security arrangements, thanks to its unmatched military capabilities and demonstrated knowhow for coercion to peace. Syria's fate will be decided by Russia, Iran and Turkey, with the US not even invited to the talks. Afghanistan will fall into the sphere of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. And the biggest losers will be former US regional allies, first and foremost Israel, followed by Saudi Arabia.

My question for you is this: where would you place the USA (or the Empire) on your 5 stages of decline and do you believe that the USA (or the Empire) can reverse that trend?

Here is Dmitry's reply:

Collapse, at each stage, is a historical process that takes time to run its course as the system adapts to changing circumstances, compensates for its

weaknesses and finds ways to continue functioning at some level. But what changes rather suddenly is faith, or, to put it in more businesslike terms, sentiment. A large segment of the population or an entire political class within a country or the entire world can function based on a certain set of assumptions for much longer than the situation warrants but then over a very short period of time switch to a different set of assumptions. All that sustains the status quo beyond that point is institutional inertia. It imposes limits on how fast systems can change without collapsing entirely. Beyond that point, people will tolerate the older practices only until replacements for them can be found.

Stage 1: Financial collapse. Faith in “business as usual” is lost.

Internationally, the major change in sentiment in the world has to do with the role of the US dollar (and, to a lesser extent, the Euro and the Yen—the other two reserve currencies of the three-legged globalist central banker stool). The world is transitioning to the use of local currencies, currency swaps and commodities markets backed by gold. The catalyst for this change of sentiment was provided by the US administration itself which sawed through its own perch by its use of unilateral sanctions. By using its control over dollar-based transactions to block international transactions it doesn't happen to like it forced other countries to start looking for alternatives. Now a growing list of countries sees throwing off the shackles of the US dollar as a strategic goal. Russia and China use the ruble and the yuan for their expanding trade; Iran sells oil to India for rupees. Saudi Arabia has started to accept the yuan for its oil.

This change has many knock-on effects. If the dollar is no longer needed to conduct international trade, other nations no longer have to hold large quantities of it in reserve. Consequently, there is no longer a need to buy up large quantities of US Treasury notes. Therefore, it becomes unnecessary to run large trade surpluses with the US, essentially conducting trade at a loss. Further, the attractiveness of the US as an export market drops and the cost of imports to the US rises, thereby driving up cost inflation. A vicious spiral ensues in which the ability of the US government to borrow internationally to finance the gaping chasm of its various deficits becomes impaired. Sovereign default of the US government and national bankruptcy then follow.

The US may still look mighty, but its dire fiscal predicament coupled with its denial of the inevitability of bankruptcy, makes it into something of a Blanche DuBois from the Tennessee Williams play “A Streetcar Named Desire.” She was “always dependent on the kindness of strangers” but was tragically unable to tell the difference between kindness and desire. In this case, the desire is for national advantage and security, and to minimize risk by getting rid of an unreliable trading partner.

How quickly or slowly this comes to pass is difficult to guess at and impossible to calculate. It is possible to think of the financial system in terms of a physical analogue, with masses of funds traveling at some velocity having a certain inertia ($p = mv$) and with forces acting on that mass to accelerate it along a different trajectory ($F = ma$). It is also possible to think of it in terms of hordes of stampeding animals who can change course abruptly when panicked. The recent abrupt moves in the financial markets, where trillions of dollars of notional, purely speculative value have been wiped out within weeks, are more in line with the latter model.

Stage 2: Commercial collapse. Faith that “the market shall provide” is lost.

Within the US there is really no other alternative to the market. There are a few rustic enclaves, mostly religious communities, that can feed themselves, but that’s a rarity. For everyone else there is no choice but to be a consumer. Consumers who are broke are called “bums,” but they are still consumers. To the extent that the US has a culture, it is a commercial culture in which the goodness of a person is based on the goodly sums of money in their possession. Such a culture can die by becoming irrelevant (when everyone is dead broke) but by then most of the carriers of this culture are likely to be dead too. Alternatively, it can be replaced by a more humane culture that isn’t entirely based on the cult of Mammon—perhaps, dare I think, through a return to a pre-Protestant, pre-Catholic Christian ethic that values people’s souls above objects of value?

Stage 3: Political collapse. Faith that “the government will take care of you” is lost.

All is very murky at the moment, but I would venture to guess that most people in the US are too distracted, too stressed and too preoccupied with their own vices and obsessions to pay much attention to the political realm.

Of the ones that do pay attention, a fair number of them seem clued in to the fact that the US is not a democracy at all but an elites-only sandbox in which transnational corporate and oligarchic interests build and knock down each others' sandcastles.

The extreme political polarization, where two virtually identical pro-capitalist, pro-war parties pretend to wage battle by virtue-signaling may be a symptom of the extremely decrepit state of the entire political arrangement: people are made to watch the billowing smoke and to listen to the deafening noise in the hopes that they won't notice that the wheels are no longer turning.

The fact that what amounts to palace intrigue—the fracas between the White House, the two houses of Congress and a ghoulish grand inquisitor named Mueller—has taken center stage is uncannily reminiscent of various earlier political collapses, such as the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire or of the fall and the consequent beheading of Louis XVI. The fact that Trump, like the Ottoman worthies, stocks his harem with East European women, lends an eerie touch. That said, most people in the US seem blind to the nature of their overlords in a way that the French, with their Jilletes Jaunes movement (just as an example) are definitely not.

Stage 4: Social collapse. Faith that “your people will take care of you” is lost.

I have been saying for some years now that within the US, social collapse has largely run its course, although whether people actually believe that is another matter entirely. Defining “your people” is rather difficult. The symbols are still there—the flag, the Statue of Liberty and a predilection for iced drinks and heaping plates of greasy fried foods—but the melting pot seems to have suffered a meltdown and melted all the way to China. At present half the households within the US speak a language other than English at home, and a fair share of the rest speak dialects of English that are not mutually intelligible with the standard North American English dialect of broadcast television and university lecturers.

Throughout its history as a British colony and as a nation the US has been dominated by the Anglo ethnos. The designation “ethnos” is not an ethnic label. It is not strictly based on genealogy, language, culture, habitat, form of government or any other single factor or group of factors. These may all be

important to one extent or another, but the viability of an ethnos is based solely on its cohesion and the mutual inclusivity and common purpose of its members. The Anglo ethnos reached its zenith in the wake of World War II, during which many social groups were intermixed in the military and their more intelligent members.

Fantastic potential was unleashed when privilege—the curse of the Anglo ethnos since its inception—was temporarily replaced with merit and the more talented demobilized men, of whatever extraction, were given a chance at education and social advancement by the GI Bill. Speaking a new sort of American English based on the Ohio dialect as a Lingua Franca, these Yanks—male, racist, sexist and chauvinistic and, at least in their own minds, victorious—were ready to remake the entire world in their own image.

They proceeded to flood the entire world with oil (US oil production was in full flush then) and with machines that burned it. Such passionate acts of ethnogenesis are rare but not unusual: the Romans who conquered the entire Mediterranean basin, the barbarians who then sacked Rome, the Mongols who later conquered most of Eurasia and the Germans who for a very brief moment possessed an outsized Lebensraum are other examples.

And now it is time to ask: what remains of this proud conquering Anglo ethnos today? We hear shrill feminist cries about “toxic masculinity” and minorities of every stripe railing against “whitesplaining” and in response we hear a few whimpers but mostly silence. Those proud, conquering, virile Yanks who met and fraternized with the Red Army at the River Elbe on April 25, 1945—where are they? Haven’t they devolved into a sad little subethnos of effeminate, porn-addicted overgrown boys who shave their pubic hair and need written permission to have sex without fear of being charged with rape?

Will the Anglo ethnos persist as a relic, similar to how the English have managed to hold onto their royals (who are technically no longer even aristocrats since they now practice exogamy with commoners)? Or will it get wiped out in a wave of depression, mental illness and opiate abuse, its glorious history of raping, plunder and genocide erased and the statues of its war heros/criminals knocked down? Only time will tell.

Stage 5: Cultural collapse. Faith in “the goodness of humanity” is lost.

The term “culture” means many things to many people, but it is more productive to observe cultures than to argue about them. Cultures are expressed through people’s stereotypical behaviors that are readily observable in public. These are not the negative stereotypes often used to identify and reject outsiders but the positive stereotypes—cultural standards of behavior, really—that serve as requirements for social adequacy and inclusion. We can readily assess the viability of a culture by observing the stereotypical behaviors of its members.

- Do people exist as a single continuous, inclusive sovereign realm or as a set of exclusive, potentially warring enclaves segregated by income, ethnicity, education level, political affiliation and so on? Do you see a lot of walls, gates, checkpoints, security cameras and “no trespassing” signs? Is the law of the land enforced uniformly or are there good neighborhoods, bad neighborhoods and no-go zones where even the police fear to tread?*
- Do random people thrown together in public spontaneously enter into conversation with each other and are comfortable with being crowded together, or are they aloof and fearful, and prefer to hide their face in the little glowing rectangle of their smartphone, jealously guarding their personal space and ready to regard any encroachment on it as an assault?*
- Do people remain good-natured and tolerant toward each other even when hard-pressed or do they hide behind a façade of tense, superficial politeness and fly into a rage at the slightest provocation? Is conversation soft in tone, gracious and respectful or is it loud, shrill, rude and polluted with foul language? Do people dress well out of respect for each other, or to show off, or are they all just déclassé slobs—even the ones with money?*
- Observe how their children behave: are they fearful of strangers and trapped in a tiny world of their own or are they open to the world and ready to treat any stranger as a surrogate brother or sister, aunt or uncle, grandmother or grandfather without requiring any special introduction? Do the adults studiously ignore each others’ children or do they spontaneously act as a single family?*

- *If there is a wreck on the road, do they spontaneously rush to each others' rescue and pull people out before the wreck explodes, or do they, in the immortal words of Frank Zappa, "get on the phone and call up some flakes" who "rush on over and wreck it some more"?*
- *If there is a flood or a fire, do the neighbors take in the people who are rendered homeless, or do they allow them to wait for the authorities to show up and bus them to some makeshift government shelter?*

It is possible to quote statistics or to provide anecdotal evidence to assess the state and the viability of a culture, but your own eyes and other senses can provide all the evidence you need to make that determination for yourself and to decide how much faith to put in "the goodness of humanity" that is evident in the people around you.

Dmitry concluded his reply by summarizing his view like this:

Cultural and social collapse are very far along. Financial collapse is waiting for a trigger. Commercial collapse will happen in stages some of which—food deserts, for instance—have already happened in many places. Political collapse will only become visible once the political class gives up. It's not as simple as saying which stage we are at. They are all happening in parallel, to one extent or another.

My own (totally subjective) opinion is that the USA has already reached stages 1 through 4, and that there are signs that stage 5 has begun; mainly in big cities as US small towns and rural areas (Trump's power base, by the way) are still struggling to maintain the norms and behaviors one could observe in the USA of the 1980s. When I have visitors from Europe they always comment how friendly and welcoming US Americans are (true, I live in a small-town in East-Central Florida, not in Miami...). These are the communities which voted for Trump because they said "we want our country back". Alas, instead of giving them their country back, Trump gifted it to the Neocons...

Conclusion: connecting the dots; or not

Frankly, the dots are all over the place; it is really hard to miss them. However, for the *doubleplusgoodthinking* "ideological drone" they remain largely invisible, and this is not due to any eyesight problem, but due to that drone's total inability to connect the

dots. These are the kind of folks who danced on the deck of the Titanic while it was sinking. For them, when the inevitable catastrophe comes, it will be a total, mind-blowing, surprise. But, until that moment, they will keep on denying the obvious, no matter how obvious that obvious has become.

In the meantime, the US ruling elites are locked into an ugly internal struggle which only further weakens the USA. What is so telling is that the Democrats are still stuck with their same clueless, incompetent and infinitely arrogant leadership, in spite of the fact that everybody knows that the Democratic Party is in deep crisis and that new faces are desperately needed. But no, they are still completely stuck in their old ways and the same gang of gerontocrats continues to rule the party apparatus.

That is another surefire sign of degeneracy: when a regime can only produce incompetent, often old, leaders who are completely out of touch with reality and who blame their own failures on internal (“deplorables”) and external (“the Russians”) factors. Again, think of the Soviet Union under Brezhnev, the Apartheid regime in South Africa under F. W. de Klerk, or the Kerensky regime in 1917 Russia. It is quite telling that the political leader whom the AngloZionists try to scare the most simply thinks of them as “[first-rate idiots](#)“, is it not?

As for the Republicans, they are basically a subsidiary of the Israeli Likud Party. Just take a look at the long list of losers the Likud produced at home, and you will get a sense of what they can do in its US colony.

Eventually the USA will rebound; I have no doubts about that at all. This is a big country with millions of immensely talented people, immense natural resources and no credible threat to its territory. But that can only happen after a real *regime* change (as opposed to a change in Presidential Administration) which, itself, is only going to happen after an “E2 catastrophe” collapse.

Until then, we will all be waiting for Godot.

The Saker

The Russian pension chicken is coming home to roost... (UPDATED)

January 18, 2019

[According to RT](#), citing a [Levada Center poll](#),

Over 50 percent of Russians are disappointed in the government of Dmitry Medvedev, which, they believe, is unable to curb growing prices and provide jobs for people, a new poll has revealed. Some 23 percent said they were absolutely sure that the government must resign, with another 30 percent telling Levada-Center that they were also leaning toward this opinion. This means that a total of 53 percent would like the country to have a new cabinet. Trust in the government has crumbled since September, when only 23 percent advocated its resignation. Meanwhile, the proportion of people who believed the government should stay in charge was 40 percent, with 14 percent expressing full confidence in the cabinet, and 26 percent saying that resignation wouldn't be the best idea.

This was very predictable and, in fact, I did predict just that [when I wrote](#):

“A comment I just saw on the YouTube chat of the inauguration was succinct and to the point: “Путин кинул народ – мы не за Медведева голосовали” or “Putin betrayed the people – we did not vote for Medvedev”. This is going to be a very widely shared feeling, I am afraid (...) Medvedev is unpopular and that most Russians hoped to see a new face. Yet Putin ignored this public sentiment. That is a very worrying sign, in my opinion“.

In a [subsequent article](#) I wrote that

“it is quite clear to me that a new type of Russian opposition is slowly forming.

Well, it always existed, really – I am talking about people who supported Putin and the Russian foreign policy and who disliked Medvedev and the Russian internal policies. Now the voice of those who say that Putin is way too soft in his stance toward the Empire will only get stronger. As will the voices of those who speak of a truly toxic degree of nepotism and patronage in the Kremlin (again, Mutko being the perfect example). When such accusations come from rabid pro-western liberals, they have very

little traction, but when they come from patriotic and even nationalist politicians (Nikolai Starikov for example) they start taking on a different dimension. For example, while the court jester Zhirinovskii and his LDPR party loyally supported Medvedev, the Communist and the Just Russia parties did not. Unless the political tension around figures like Kudrin and Medvedev is somehow resolved (maybe a timely scandal?), we might witness the growth of a real opposition movement in Russia, and not one run by the Empire. It will be interesting to see if Putin's personal ratings will begin to go down and what he will have to do in order to react to the emergence of such a real opposition“.

Think about it in this way: we know from ALL the past elections that the pro-Western segment of the Russian population is somewhere around 1-3% (that is why they cannot make it into the Duma). But let's generously give that hardcore, liberal, opposition 5%, for argument's sake. So if 53% of Russians want a new cabinet, and if 5% of Russians are hardcore pro-Western liberals, then who are the remaining 48%?

Or in this way: if 53% of Russians want a new cabinet, and if Putin's approval rating is still somewhere in the 65% range, who are those Russians who like Putin but dislike the Medvedev government?

There is an easy cop-out argument which I've often offered to explain away this fact:

Levada Center is officially classified as a “foreign agent” under Russian law. This makes sense: for one thing, Levada Center receives most of its financing from abroad, including the USA and even the Pentagon! Furthermore, Levada is staffed by liberals (in the Russian meaning of the word which really means “pro-US”) whose biases are also reflected in their work. However, while this is all true, Levada is still credible enough to be cited even by Russian officials. Finally, the kind of results Levada publishes are often generally similar to the finding of the official VTsIOM polling institution, not down to the percentage point, but often reflecting similar trends (check out the VTsIOM English language page here: <https://wciom.com/>). So the fact that Putin is much more popular than Medvedev or that the majority of Russian people are unhappy with the government really is not in doubt.

So regardless of the actual numbers, it is clear that the Russian government is only popular with those whom it allows to make a lot of money (corporations and various millionaires and billionaires) and that everybody else strongly dislikes it.

And yet, recently Putin was asked if he was happy with the government and his reply was “[on the whole, yes](#)”.

This type of political yoga is hard to sustain in the long term: if Putin is the champion of the interests of the common people, and if most common people feel that the government cares more for millionaires and billionaires, then how can the President say that he is “on the whole happy” with the government?

It is truly a crying shame that the basics of Marxism-Leninism are not taught in schools and colleges any more (even some self-described “Communists” are clearly clueless about what Marx, Lenin or even Hegel taught!). Not because the solutions advocated by Marx and his followers are so universally effective, but because one can use the Marxist-Leninist conceptual toolkit to better understand the world we live in, and, one can do this without necessarily endorsing the solutions offered by Marxism. For example, in the West at least, very few people are aware of this very simple Marxist-Leninist definition of what a state, any state, really is. According to Lenin, the state is simply an “*apparatus of coercion and violence by which the ruling class governs the society*“. Specifically Lenin wrote:

In essence, the state is the ruling apparatus created from the human society. When such a group of people appears, one which is only concerned with ruling over others, and which for that purpose needs a coercion apparatus which can force people to obey by means of jails, special units, armed forces, etc. – that is the moment when the state appears (Lenin, collective works, vol 39, page 69).

From a Marxist point of view, any state is always and by definition is the dictatorship of the ruling class, which is a good thing, at least according to the Marxists, when this ruling class is the workers and people, and a very bad thing when the ruling class is the plutocracy.

In the post-modern West, where political discourse has been reduced to a particularly nauseating form of intellectual flatulence, the very notion of “class” and “class warfare” has been fully replaced with vapid (pseudo-) identity politics which completely obfuscate all the real issues and problems our world is dealing with. Thus, by removing the concepts and categories needed to understand the nature of the struggle which is taking place internationally, but also inside each of the countries currently living under the AngloZionist yoke, the leaders of the Empire have deprived

the people they rule over from the means to understand why and how they are oppressed. All that nonsense about “gay” rights, gun control, #meetoo, the many sex scandals, the struggle for racial identity (White or Black or any other), abortion, drugs and all the rest of the crap we are fed on a daily basis by the AngloZionist propaganda machine are primarily a distraction to keep the eyes of the general population from the real issues. In a way, this zombification and re-direction to fake topics serves exactly the same function as the red cape of the bullfighter: to keep the bull busy with trying to gore a harmless red piece of cloth while completely missing the real cause of his suffering and eventual death.

From that point of view, the Russian people are much better informed and have a much better understanding of what is going on. For example, while in the West the people define “democracy” as “people power” (or something similar), in Russia the joke is that “democracy is the power of the democrats” which, in Russia, is a general codeword/euphemism for “pro-US wealthy liberal” who want to turn Russia into some kind of “bigger Poland” or something equally uninspiring.

Various pro-Western “intellectuals” like to say that this is an old Russian pathology: to say that the Czar (President) is very good, but his court (the Ministers) are bad and that this makes absolutely no sense. These are the folks who go as far as denying the existence of a struggle between what I call Eurasian Sovereignists (roughly Putin supporters) and Atlantic Integrationists (roughly Medvedev and the “economic block” of this government).

The folks who deny this remind me of something Berthold Brecht once wrote after [the 1953 uprising in Berlin](#) in a short poem entitled “The Solution”: (emphasis added)

After the uprising of the 17th of June
The Secretary of the Writers’ Union
Had leaflets distributed in the Stalinallee
Stating that *the people*
Had forfeited the confidence of the government
And could win it back only
By redoubled efforts. Would it not be easier
In that case for the government
To dissolve the people
And elect another?

This deep alienation from the Russian masses, this notion that the Russian people have, yet again, failed to heed the “wise words” of the “progressive intelligentsia” and other (mainly financial) “elites” has plagued the Russian ruling classes since Peter I and is still at the very core of their worldview. Believe you me, the Russian “liberals” and the folks in the West who [deny that there is any 5th column in Russia](#) are psychologically and politically joined at the hip: neither one of them can accept this. Furthermore, both the Russian “liberals” and the western believers in the values of “democracy” and “free market capitalism” share exactly the same worldview: they want the Russian people to become “Europeans” not in a geographical sense, of course (geographically speaking most Russians live in the European part of Russia), but culturally! This is what the Popes wanted, this is what the French Freemasons wanted, this is what the Nazis wanted, and this is what the AngloZionists want. That dream to turn Russians into Europeans while totally cleansing them from any “Russian-ness” is what united *all* the invaders of Russia over the centuries.

But the “stubborn” Russian people just don’t seem to “get it” and, for some totally mysterious reason, they always resist all these “benevolent” western attempts at “civilizing” them.

This is exactly what we see today: Putin and his Eurasian Sovereignists try as hard as they can to *sovereignize* Russia; in other words, they want to make Russia *truly* Russian again. Sounds basic, but that is categorically unacceptable to the Russian plutocrats and to their supporters in the West. Thus any kind of defense of the Russian-ness of Russia is immediately and contemptuously dismissed as “national leftism”, “nationalism” or, God forbid!, “monarchism”. And when the person trying to make the argument that Russia ought to be Russian uses Marxist concepts or categories, these arguments are also dismissed out of hand as an “outdated rhetoric of a system which has failed and discredited itself”. What they fail to realize is to say that the collapse of the Soviet Union was due primarily/solely to the Marxist or Communist ideology is just as stupid as blaming the current collapse of democracy in the USA on the writings of the Founding Fathers rather than on the SOB politicians who are destroying this country day after day after day. Tell me: when the USA finally bites the dust, will you simply declare that “democracy is dead” and that the “collapse of the USA proved that democracy is not a viable regime”? So yes, the Soviet Union did indeed collapse, broken into 15 pieces by its own ruling elite (the [Nomenklatura](#)), but the ideas contained in the Marxist-Leninist ideology have not only not been “defeated” – they have not even been challenged (more on this issue [here](#)).

But, thank God! most Russians are still not willing to be incorporated into the “European cultural [Borg collective](#)“, at least not in the cultural sense. And in spite of 300 years of oppression by various pro-western regimes (with various degrees of russophobia, not all were equally bad), the Russian people still want to remain Russian, not just by speaking a language, but by having a ruler and a regime in power which they feel defends their interests and not the interests of the ruling class. They want to live in their own civilizational realm, and not the kind of post-Christian intellectual desert the West has become.

Many decades of rabid russophobia by the rulers of the AngloZionist Empire have convinced the Russian people that they have no friends in the European or North American ruling elites and that true freedom comes through liberation, not submission. That, and the appalling example of the consequences of the “Euromaidan” in the Ukraine.

At the end of the day, it is not about GDP or the availability of cheap consumer goods. At the end of the day, [it all depends on real, moral, ethical, spiritual and civilizational values](#). This was true 1000 years ago and this is still true today. At least in Russia.

It is very important to keep a close eye on this trend: the appearance of a slowly but surely growing (truly) patriotic opposition (as opposed to the CIA-paid clowns in the Russian liberal camp). As for the “official” opposition (LDPR, KPRF and the Just Russia), they might decide to grow a few teeth, initially small, baby teeth only, but if this trend accelerates, they might decide to look a tad more credible. Until now the rather lame and ridiculous LDPR & KPRF parties are just a collective form of court jesters with no real opposition potential. Just look at how the KPRF, thoroughly discredited by their crazy choice of the millionaire Grudin in for candidate, jumped onto the pension reform PR-disaster to suddenly try to launch a referendum. This would never have happened in the past.

The political landscape in Russia is becoming more complicated, which is both good and bad. It is bad because Putin’s personal political credit suffers, however modestly for now, from [his continuous inability to purge the Kremlin from the 5th columnists](#), but it is also good because if things get bad enough, Putin will have no choice but to (finally!) get rid of at least the most notorious 5th columnists. But fundamentally the Russian people need to decide. Do they really want to live in a western-style capitalist society (with all the russophobic politics and the adoption of

the terminally degenerate “culture” such a choice implies), or do they want a “social society” (to use Putin’s own words) – meaning a society in which social and economic justice and the good of the country are placed above corporate and personal profits.

You could say that this is a battle of greed vs ethics.

The future of Russia, and much of the world, will depend on the outcome of this battle.

The Saker

UPDATE: well, just as I was mentioning that the fact that Levada Center and VTsIOM mostly agree, at least on trends, [the Russian media is now reporting](#) that the latter is now also reporting a drop in the popularity of Putin. And just to make things worse, the Russian authorities have deported an (in-)famous anti-Nazi Ukrainian journalist, Elena Boiko, to the Nazi-occupied Ukraine in spite of the fact that Boiko had requested political asylum in Russia. Now, Boiko is a very controversial person for sure (and, personally, not *at all* my cup of tea), but the sole fact that Russia would deport ANY anti-Nazi activist to the Nazi-occupied Ukraine is disgusting and revolting. And, sure enough, the bovine-excreta is already hitting the proverbial fan as now members of the Duma, journalists and various personalities are demanding explanations for this absolutely stupid and deeply immoral act. Sadly, I can only agree with Nikolai Starikov who speaks of a “liberal revanche” following the “Russian Spring” of 2014. If this kind of nonsense continues we will see a further deterioration of Putin’s personal rating along with a gradual degradation of the Russian political environment.

Russia, Israel and the values of “western civilization” – where is the truth?

January 25, 2019

First, what’s the deal with this obsession about bombing entire nations back into the “stone age”?

Very interesting article in RT today: “[IDF chief turned PM candidate touts body count & bombing Gaza into ‘stone age’ in campaign ad](#)” (please read the whole thing – it is short and very enlightening). When I saw that, I immediately had a flash back to a (truly brilliant, if evil) US diplomat, James Baker, who promised Iraqi Prime Minister Tarik Aziz (whom [the Empire kept in jail until his death in spite of the fact that the 79 year old man suffered from depression, diabetes, heart disease, and ulcers](#)) that the Empire would “[bring it back to the stone age](#)”.

Now, Benny Gantz is your typical Israeli Zionazi nutcase with all that entails, but this can hardly be said of James Baker who was one of the most educated and brilliant diplomats the USA ever produced. So what’s this thing about bringing those who dare defy the AngloZionist Empire back to the “stone age”. Coincidence? You tell me!

I sure don’t think so.

The Israeli butchery in Gaza enjoyed the massive support of the Israeli people who even organized special “viewing locations” for the joy of seeing Palestinian civilians (the vast majority of the people the Israelis murdered in Gaza) massacred. Which is not very different from the way the US Americans (and their European vassals) organized “viewing locations” in their TV sets for the joy of seeing Iraqi civilians (the vast majority of the people the USA and its vassals murdered in Iraq) massacred. The difference is only in numbers: in Gaza the Israelis murdered “only” [about 1500 Palestinians](#) whereas the USA can pride itself on having massacred well [over a million Iraqis](#).

Still not convinced?

Then how about Mr MAGA [promising to “devastate” the DPRK](#)? or, even better, to make Iran “SUFFER CONSEQUENCES THE LIKES OF WHICH FEW THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE EVER SUFFERED BEFORE” (all in caps as [in the original](#)).

Now if this was a schoolyard or, say, a Harley-Davidson biker meeting, I would say that this is just the kind of empty talk of insecure males trying to compensate for their insecurities by clumsily affirming their manhood with roaring macho threats.

After all, in the real world, both the US and Israel got thoroughly whooped each time they took on an enemy which was not defenseless (the best example being, of course, the “Divine Victory” of Hezbollah against Israel (and the US, of course, which had promised a “[new Middle East](#)” just before the Israeli attack) in 2006.

But our planet is not a schoolyard and thousands and even millions died as a result of that kind of mindset. And a President who thinks in “tweets” worthy of a 7th grade pimply 13-year old is outright frightening (or, at least, ought to be).

Now it is rather unsurprising that the western Zionazi press would

1. blame it all on the Palestinians and their supporters
2. turn away its prudish eyes from such language and massacres
3. go back to blaming Russia for everything imaginable (and [even unimaginable](#)).

What is more interesting is all the self-declared anti-Zionists who actually blame *Russia* for not doing enough to protect Syria, or Iran, or [[fill in the blank](#)]. I already thoroughly debunked the flawed logic and arguments of that group in my article “[Why is Putin “allowing” Israel to bomb Syria](#)” so I won’t repeat it all here and will assume that the reader will have read that.

And yet, after the latest Israeli air strikes in Syria (which also follow a pattern I predicted [here](#)) I am, again, getting panicked emails about Putin/Russia “betrayed/gave up” Syria or how the S-300s/Pantsirs are “not working”, Putin is a “Zionist agent”, etc. Sigh, rolleyes...

*[Sidebar: for one thing, that kind of nonsense shows an amazing level of illiteracy in military affairs. Why? Because all these Israeli attacks on (alleged) pro-Iranian or even Iranian positions were small, even if annoying, **pinpricks**, especially when compared to the very real losses suffered by Iranian and pro-Iranian forces in combat (real combat, not the pretend-combat for Hollywood the Israelis and their US vassals have mostly performed in the past decades). Just because each such pinprick results in hours of Israeli (and pro-Israeli) chest-thumping does not mean that it was in*

any way effective in deterring Iran or its allies. The truth is that Iran and its allies are all over Syria (they mostly came after the AngloZionists decided to trigger a revolution against Assad – bravo AngloZionist geniuses!!) and that they ain't leaving].

In Russian this type of behavior, which is really a political manipulation tactic, is called “перевести стрелки” or, roughly, “change focus”, or simply “obfuscate” (again, for a detailed discussion of this, please see my article “[Why is Putin “allowing” Israel to bomb Syria](#)“). So let's bring the focus right back to where it belongs: Israel and the total support the so-called “West” has given it for decades.

By the way, Russia is also guilty, at least in my opinion, of overlooking the plight of the Palestinians (I made my own distress about the Russian position very clear in my piece “[It All Depends On Your Values](#)“). And yes, there is most definitely a powerful pro-Israeli lobby in Russia too, including, alas, in the [Russian White House](#) and even in the Kremlin. But the difference between Russia's stance towards the issue of Israel and it's murderous policies and the stance of the West could not be more different. Simply put:

- ***Russia does condemn Israel*** when the latter acts in violation of international law and norms of civilized behavior and Russia does offer support, both political and military, to “resistance” countries such as Syria.
- ***The West supports Israel*** no matter what and finances and arms it to the teeth and supports its genocidal policies to the hilt.

Most importantly, ***Russians never say that Israel stands for “Russian values” or is the “only democracy in the Middle-East”***. So while Russia does not, to my immense regret and shame, take a truly principle-driven position like Iran, she does not obsequiously use every opportunity to show her total and unconditional love for Israel and everything Israel does.

The difference here is not only one of quantity, but also one of quality or, if you prefer, a quantitative change which eventually leads to a qualitative shift. There is a difference between first looking out for your own self-interest and being a prostitute, is there not?

Blurring or otherwise obfuscating such crucial and profound distinctions is a clever form of deception.

You might ask “but what *are* Russian values then?”

What’s the deal with Holy Russia then?!

Fair enough. Right now Russia is still in search of herself. She is a project, a moving target, a nation desperately trying to re-gain her true and full sovereignty and to (finally!) get rid of a [powerful 5th columnist gang inside the ruling and wealthy elites](#) who simply want to make more money while aping the West. And yet, even that somewhat confused nation, which is looking for her true roots and identity, (which might take a very long time - Solzhenitsyn predicted that 200 years would be needed for Russia to truly recover), did not lose the very core of her true civilizational values.

In the distant 13th century the Russian Prince and [Saint Alexander Nevsky](#) famously declared “Не в силе Бог, а в правде” which can be translated as “***God is not in force/power, but in truth/justice***“.

Many centuries later, in a year 2000 movie (the year Putin came to power) called “[Brother 2](#)” a very different kind of Russian hero, [Danila Bagrov](#), has a (now famous) monologue with an American and rhetorically asks him “*tell me American, where is strength/power found? In money?*” and proceeds to answer himself and say “***I think that strength/power is in the truth/justice, he who has the truth/justice is stronger***“.

*[Sidebar: I am translating the word “pravda” (yes, yes, that same word “pravda” as in the Soviet newspaper) as “truth/justice” as, depending on the context it can have either one, or even both, of these meanings. And an even more complex Slavic concept of truth would be “istina” which Father Pavel Florensky discussed in this famous book “The Pillar and Ground of the Truth: An Essay in Orthodox Theodicy in Twelve Letters” of which I posted a translated crucial passage [here](#) and which I *highly* recommend as a “must read” to anybody interested in understanding the Russian civilization, culture and history]*

So one 13th century Russian said that God is in Truth and another 20th century Russian said that strength is in Truth. And both were facing a threat from the West when they made their statements; and seven centuries later, so little has changed... amazing, no?

Not a coincidence if you ask me.

I already hear the reply of those lobotomized by western materialism who will, no doubt, say something along the lines of “*oh please! don’t give us this propaganda about “Holy Russia” again! One quick look at Russian history immediately shows that Russia was never so holy and that, in fact, amazing levels of evil, depravity, corruption and even pathological sadism could be found throughout her long and bloody history and also in our times!*”.

And I can only admit that there is, alas, much truth to that statement. And there is still much evil, pathology and corruption in today’s Russia, no argument here!

But there is also much this statement is completely missing.

First, right next to an amazing degree of evil and depravity, Russian history is also filled with no less amazing cases of true holiness, from [Saint Boris and Saint Gleb](#) to the [millions of saints and New Martyrs and Confessors of the 20th century](#).

But that is not even the main issue here. The main issue here is that the concept of “Holy Russia” is not primarily descriptive, but **prescriptive**. It is a call, an ideal, something which modern people with the crude consumerism and generally materialism-suppressed *nous* simply cannot understand or even imagine, but which inspired many generations over the 1000 years+ of Russian history to live a life maybe still *in* the world, but not “*of* this world” (John 15:19)!

This is why, in spite of three centuries of rule by foreign elites and 70+ years of materialism run amok, an otherwise very modern suspense movie hero like Danila Bagrov can still speak of what the truth is and where it can be found and why the Russian audience “gets it”, even the atheists.

Check out this dialog in this short, English subtitled, excerpt:

<https://youtu.be/Tlo-r3anKVc>

Notice something important here: Danila does not think that only the American is a money-worshipping and clueless idiot. He says “*even my brother believes [that the truth] is in money*“. So yes, there are plenty of *nous*-suppressed people in Russia too. And I won’t even go into what most Russians who live in the West think as so many of them need to justify their own voluntary exile from Russia by either advocating that Russians resume aping westerners or by declaring that Russia is really no different from any other western country. These are the folks who have rejected any form of

true spirituality for a rather bizarre form of worship of consumerism. And yeah, a lot of them are Russian, at least by birth or by language (if not by culture or spirit).

[Sidebar: there was a time when the West was no different from the East in terms of spirituality, ethos, values and even holiness. But that all came to a gradual full stop with each passing century following the breakaway of the Frank-occupied Rome from the rest of the Christian world. Now all is left is either a post-modern wasteland à la Conchita Wurst (see “it” “pray” with Latin officials [here](#) – amazing sight to behold indeed!) or a rather nasty nationalist and even racist blow-back to this postmodernism degeneracy à la Alt-Right. What a crying shame after 1000 years of real western Christianity! There have been many western saints and martyrs like SS Boris and Gleb, but there is no “Danila Bagrov” on western TV screens today. All that is left of the once Christian West are thousands of holy relics of western saints nobody cares about, least of all the Pope and his minions at the Vatican...]

Back to our original topic:

And finally, what’s the deal with the “only democracy in the Middle-East“?

What is “Israel” really? It is a democracy only in the modern Russian sense of the word, meaning that “*democracy is the power of the democrats*“. In this case, these “democrats” happen to be racist nutcases who have a religious belief (literally, see [here](#)) in their racist uniqueness and their God-given right to massacre the semi-human *goyim* (again: literally, see [here](#)) and who don’t give a damn about “western values” (well, other than impunity, consumerism and violence). It is most certainly the country which is the only and last *official* racist state on the planet (see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)).

And contrary to the fantasies of various Jew-haters, this has absolutely nothing to do with “the Jews” or being Jewish, and everything to do with an exceptionally toxic *interpretation* of the Old Testament by Pharisaic rabbis who developed a God- and man-hating religion in response to the *galut* (the exile from Palestine of those Jews who rejected Christ) and to the tremendous success of Christianity. As for modern Zionism, it is nothing more than a transposition of the very same racist assumptions and implications of Pharisaic Judaism to a materialistic milieu, that’s all.

Does that make Israeli a part of the “western civilization“?

You tell me!

But if your reply is “yes”, don’t come whining when I point that out to you! And if your reply is “no” – then, tell me: how is it that no western politician can agree with you without risking his career and reputation?

Anyway, I think that it is high time for those who find the mote in Russia’s “eye” to look at the huge and densely populated forest of their own civilization’s “eye” and maybe try to imitate the beautiful example of those westerners who sailed for Gaza and still do all they can to help the oppressed Palestinians, no? And how about showing some gratitude to Iran for being pretty much the only country on the planet, not only to support the Palestinians, but to actually accept the sacrifice of a lot of lives (and resources) to help them?! Don’t they deserve our gratitude and admiration for their courage?

You really don’t like Putin? Fine. But rather than place your trust and hopes in the lies of Mr MAGA or the Clinton gang, maybe you ought to make Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei your true hero, no? Or, at least, “al-Sayyid Hassan” (Nasrallah)!

If the West persists on it’s current path, it will die like the “sad old man” in Roger Water’s superb title “[Dogs](#)”

*You gotta keep one eye looking over your shoulder
You know it’s going to get harder, and harder, and harder as you get older
And in the end you’ll pack up and fly down south
Hide your head in the sand,
Just another sad old man
All alone and dying of cancer
And when you loose control, you’ll reap the harvest you have sown
And as the fear grows, the bad blood slows and turns to stone
And it’s too late to lose the weight you used to need to throw around
So have a good drown, as you go down, all alone
Dragged down by the stone*

Time will tell, of course, but my own belief is that **both** Russia and the West can only be truly saved by a return to the values of repentance and self-limitation which Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote about while still in the Soviet Union in the distant year 1973 (full text in PDF format [here](#)). The same Alexander Solzhenitsyn, already in the West a full decade later, also [warned us that only a return to true spirituality and God](#)

[could save the world](#). Again, I can only agree with him no matter how ridiculous this may sound to western (and Russian!) materialists, “cultural Christians”, or any other *nous*-suppressed person nowadays.

But that’s only one simple guy’s opinion.

So you, tell me! Where do you think strength comes from? Israel?

The Saker

The US aggression against Venezuela as a diagnostic tool

January 30, 2019

The Neocons never cease to amaze me and their latest stunt with Venezuela falls into this bizarre category of events which are both absolutely unthinkable and simultaneously absolutely predictable. This apparent logical contradiction is the direct result of a worldview and mindset which is, I believe, unique to the Neocons: a mix of imperial hubris and infinite arrogance, a complete lack of decency, a total contempt for the rest of mankind, crass ignorance, a narcissist/sociopath's inability to have any kind of empathy or imagine another guy's reaction and, finally, last but most certainly not least, crass stupidity. There is so much which can be said about the latest US aggression on Venezuela that entire books could be (and will be) written about this, but I want to begin by look at a few specific but nonetheless very symptomatic aspects:

“In your face” stupidity or bootcamp-like deliberate public humiliation?

Remember the almost universal reaction of horror when Bolton was appointed as National Security Advisor? Well, apparently, either the Neocons completely missed that, which I doubt, or they did what they always do and decided to double-down by retrieving Elliott Abrams from storage and appointing him US Special Envoy to Venezuela. I mean, yes, of course, the Neocons are stupid and sociopathic enough not to ever care about others, but in this case I think that we are dealing with a “Skripal tactic”: do something so ridiculously stupid and offensive that it places all your vassals before a stark choice: either submit and pretend like you did not notice or, alternatively, dare to say something and face with wrath of Uncle Shmuel (the Neocon's version of Uncle Sam). And it worked, in the name of “solidarity” or whatever else, the most faithful lackeys of the Empire immediate fell in line behind the latest US aggression against a sovereign nation in spite of the self-evident fact that this aggression violates every letter of the most sacred principles of international law. This is exactly the same tactic as when they make you clean toilets with a toothbrush or do push-ups in the mud during basic training: not only to condition you to total obedience, but to make you publicly give up any semblance of dignity.

This is not just a case of history repeating itself like a farce, however. It is hard to overstate how totally offensive a character like Elliott Abrams is for every Latin American who remembers the bloody US debacle in Nicaragua. US vassals now have

to give up any type of pretend-dignity in front of their own people and act as if Abrams was a respectable and sane human being.

I believe that this kind of “obedience conditioning by means of humiliation” is not just a case of the Neocons being idiots, but a deliberate tactic which will, of course, backfire and end up hurting US puppets worldwide (just like the pro-US Russian “liberal” opposition was eviscerated as a result of being associated by the Russian public opinion with the US policies against Russia, especially in the Ukraine).

Finally, these appointments also show that the senior-Neocons are frightened and paranoid as there are still plenty of very sharp junior-Neocon folks to choose from in the USA, yet they felt the need to get Abrams from conservation and place him in a key position in spite of the strong smell of naphthalene emanating from him. This reminds me of the gerontocrats of the Soviet Politburo in the worst stagnation years who had to appoint the likes of Chernenko to top positions.

The one thing the Mr MAGA’s administration has in common with the late Brezhnevian Politburo is its total inability to get anything done. My wife refers to the folks in the White House (since Dubya came to power) as the “[gang that couldn’t shoot straight](#)” and she is right (she always is!): they just can’t really get anything done anymore – all their half-assed pseudo-successes are inevitably followed by embarrassing failures.

As I wrote in my article “[The good news about the Trump Presidency: stupid can be good!](#)” these folks will only precipitate the collapse of the AngloZionist Empire, which is a very good thing. The bad thing is, of course, that the Neocons are negating any chance for a gradual, phased, collapse and are, instead, creating a dynamic in which [a sudden, catastrophic, collapse](#) becomes much more likely.

Now we have all seen the latest antic from Bolton: showing up with a yellow pad with “5,000 troops to Colombia” written on it. Again, this might be a case of Bolton being senile or not giving a damn, but I doubt it. I think that this is just another oh-so-subtle way to threaten Venezuela with a US-led invasion. And, really, why not?

If the Empire thinks it has the authority and power to decide who the President of Venezuela should be, it has to logically back up this stance with a threat, especially since there is no US authority, moral or otherwise, left.

The obvious question here is how this threat will be received in Venezuela and that largely depends on how credible that threat is. Now, “5,000 troops” could mean anything, ranging from an infantry brigade combat team to the typical US mix of as many putatively “special” forces as possible (to make every service happy and give everybody a piece of the expected (but never achieved) “victory pie” – many careers in the US depend on that kind of stuff). At this point in time, I rather not speculate and get technical about how such a force could be structured. Let’s just assume that it will be an overall credible and well-packaged force and try to speculate how the Venezuelans could react to it.

The state of the Venezuelan military

Here I am particularly lucky as I have a close and trusted Latin American friend who is now a retired Lt-Colonel who spent many months in Venezuela working with the Venezuelan military in a capacity which I cannot disclose, but which gave him quasi-total access to every unit and military facility in the country and who, just a couple of years ago, shared with me his impression of the Venezuelan military. Here is what he told me:

A military, any military, is always the product of the society which produces it and this is also true of Venezuela. It would be silly to admit that the Venezuelan economy is a total mess while expecting the Venezuelan armed forces to be a shining example of professionalism, honesty and patriotism. The sad reality is very different.

For one thing, much of the Venezuelan military is hopelessly corrupt, as is the rest of society. In a country whose economy is imploding, this is hardly surprising. Furthermore, for years both Chavez and Maduro have fought an uphill battle to remove as many potential traitors and class enemies (in a Marxist sense of the word) from the Venezuelan military and replace them with “socially close” (a Bolshevik concept) elements from the poorer sections of society. Truth be told, this was a partially successful strategy as seen by the fact that during this latest coup attempt the Venezuelan military overwhelmingly supported the Venezuelan Constitution and the legitimacy of Maduro. And yet that kind of loyalty often comes at the costs of professionalism and at the risk of corruption as seen by the case of the Venezuelan military attache to the USA who clearly was a US agent. I am afraid that the current situation in Venezuela might be similar to what it was in Syria in the very early stages of the AngloZionist war against this country when scores of top officials of the Syrian government proved to be traitors and/or US agents. In Syria the government

eventually re-took control of the situation, but only with a great deal of help from Iran and Russia and after almost being toppled by the US-run Takfiri forces.

The good news here, according to my friend, is that the Venezuelan special forces (army special forces, jungle infantry troops, “Caribe” counter insurgency units, airborne units, etc) are in a much better shape and that they could form the core of a resistance force to the invasion, not unlike what the Republican Guard eventually did in Iraq. But the biggest difference with Iraq is that in Venezuela the majority of the people are still backing Maduro and that any invasion force should expect to meet a lot of resistance of the type which the US encountered in Iraq after the invasion of the country. Also, there was a fragile truce of sorts between Hugo Chavez and various Left-wing guerillas who agreed to stop their military operations, but who also kept all their weapons “just in case”. This “case” has now happened and we can expect that any US invasion will trigger an immediate re-emergence of a Left-wing guerilla force which, combined with popular support and the key role of a core of patriotic Venezuelan special forces could form a **very** dangerous combination, especially in the mid to long term.

Keep in mind that corrupt officers don’t like combat and that while they might aid a US invasion force, they will only do so as long as things seem to go the easy way, but as soon as things go south (which is what always happens to US invasion forces) they will run as fast as they can. So while the endemic corruption now will be a problem for the Maduro government, it will become a problem for the US as soon the legitimate government is toppled.

Comparisons are necessarily tricky and crude, but with this caveat in mind, don’t think “Syria” but rather think “Iraq” when considering the possible outcomes of a US invasion.

The state of the Venezuelan people

This is really crucial. Hugo Chavez’ reforms alienated a lot of Venezuelans, especially those who made their fortunes by servicing US interests and who became your typical Latin American version of a *comprador* class. Much of the middle-class also got hurt and are angry. However, these same reforms also empowered huge numbers of destitute and poor Venezuelans who, for the first time, felt that the government stood for their interests and who remember what it was like to live in abject poverty under a US-backed regime. These folks probably have no illusion about

what the toppling of this government would mean for them and they are likely to fight hard, if not necessarily competently, to keep the little rights and means they acquired during the Chavez years. There is even what is sometimes referred to “*Chavistas without Chavez*” which some describe as potential back-stabbing traitors while other see them as more pragmatic, less ideological, faction of Chavez supporters who decry Chavez’ mistakes but don’t want their country to turn into a Colombia-style US colony. Whatever may be the case, Hugo Chavez’ pro-popular policies left a very profound mark on the country and you can expect that a lot of Venezuelans will take up arms and resist any US/Colombian invasion.

Here I think we can all express our heartfelt gratitude to Mr MAGA whose appointment of Elliott “Iran-Contra” Abrams has done more than any government sponsored propaganda to clearly and bluntly explain to the Venezuelan people who is doing what to them and why.

Seriously, Ron Paul or Tulsi Gabbard speaking of democracy is one thing, but having gangsters and psychopathic thugs like Pompeo, Bolton or Abrams in charge really sends a message and that message is that we are dealing with a banal case of highway robbery triggered by two very crude considerations:

First, to re-take control of Venezuela’s immense natural resources.

- Second, to prove to the world that Uncle Shmuel can still, [quote](#), “*pick up some small crappy little country and throw it against the wall, just to show the world we mean business*“, [unquote](#).

The obvious problem is that

1. nobody takes the US seriously because
2. the US has not been capable of defeating any country capable of resistance since many decades already.

The various US special forces, which would typically spearhead any invasion, have an especially appalling record of abject failures every time they stop posing for cameras and have to engage in real combat. I assure you that nobody in the Venezuelan military cares about movies like “Rambo” or “Delta Force” while they carefully studied US FUBARs in Somalia, Grenada, Iran and elsewhere. You can also bet that the Cubans, who have had many years of experience dealing with the (very

competent) South African special forces in Angola and elsewhere will share their experience with their Venezuelan colleagues.

Last but not least, there are a lot of weapons in circulation in Venezuela and which the various popular militias and National Guard would be more than happy to further distribute to the local population if any invasion appears to be successful.

The State of the Empire and its puppet-President Macrobama

Well, here the famous “*insanity is repeating the same thing over and over again expecting different results*” the best possible description of US actions. Just look at this sequence:

- The AngloZionists leaders of the Empire appoints a hybrid of Obama and Macron named Juan Guaido as “legitimate interim President”
- US puppets in Europe and Latin America immediately fall in line behind Uncle Shmuel
- The US promises war (aka “serious consequences“) if Guaido is arrested
- The AngloZionist Empire robs Venezuela of billions of dollars of assets
- The Empire gives part of that money to the “moderate opposition” to fund an insurrection,
- Contra-style Venezuelan “opposition” asks for US weapons
- The Ziomedia launches strategic PSYOP about Russian airplanes flying Venezuelan gold out of the country
- The Empire sabotages the biggest Venezuela oil company
- The Empire delivers an self-evidently unacceptable ultimatum to Venezuela which is self-evidently rejected
- No western politician in office dares to say a single word about this massive full-spectrum violation of all the most sacred principles of international law. But then, international law has been dead since the US/NATO war on the Serbian people, so this is hardly “news”...

Does all this not look boringly familiar?

Does this bizarre mix of Neocons, gerontocrats and deepstaters really, sincerely, believe that this time around they will “win” (however you define that)?!

More relevantly – has this recipe ever worked in the past? I would say that if we accept, for argument’s sake, that the goal is to “restore democracy” then obviously

“no”. But if the goal is to wreck a country, then it has worked, quite a few times indeed.

Next, a few misplaced hopes

I am getting a lot of emails suggesting that Russia might do in Venezuela what she did in Syria. Let me immediately tell you that this is not going to happen. Yes, there are a lot of Russians in Venezuela, but the “Russians are not coming”. For one thing, I will never cease to repeat that the Russian intervention in Syria was a very small one, and that even if this small force proved formidable, it was really acting *primarily as a force multiplier* for the Iranians, Hezbollah and the Syrian government forces. And yet, even the deployment of this very small force necessitated a huge logistics effort from Russia whose military (being a purely defensive one) is simply not structured for long-distance power projection. Syria is about 1000km from Russia. Venezuela is about 10 times (!) further. Yes, I know, a few Tu-160 visited the country twice now and there are Russian advisors in the country and the Venezuelans have a few pretty good Russian weapons systems. But here, again, this is a game of numbers. Limited numbers of Russian-made combat aircraft (fixed and rotary wing), air defense missiles or even large numbers of advanced MANPADs or assault rifles won't do the trick against a determined US-Colombian invasion. Finally, there is no Venezuelan equivalent to Iran or Hezbollah (an outside ally and friend) which would be capable and willing to deploy real combat forces for actual, sustained combat against the invader.

Next comes terrain. Yes, much of Venezuela is difficult to access, but not for jungle-experienced forces which both the US military and the Colombians have. Furthermore, there is absolutely no need to invade the entire country to topple the legitimate government. For that all you need is to control a few key facilities in a few key locations and you are done. For example, I don't see the USAF or USN wasting any time in air-to-air combat against the (few) Venezuelan Sukhois – they will simply destroy them in their hangars along with their runways and air combat management radars and command posts. So the terrain will not prevent the Empire of suppressing Venezuelan air defenses and as soon as this is done, you can expect the usual mix of bomb and missile strikes which will create chaos, wreck command and control capabilities and, basically, disorganize much of the military. Finally, US forces in Colombia and USN ships off the Venezuelan coast will enjoy a safe harbor from which to launch as many strikes as they want.

Next, hopes that Russia and China will somehow resuscitate the Venezuelan economy are also ill-founded. First, neither country is interested in pouring money into a bottomless pit. It is one thing to sign contracts which are likely to eventually produce a return on investment and quite another to dump money into a bottomless pit (as the US and Europe have found out in the Ukraine). Second, the Venezuelan economy is so deeply enmeshed in the US-UK run international financial system that neither China nor Russia can do anything about it. That is not to say that US sanctions, subversion and sabotage did not play a major role in the collapse of the Venezuelan economy, they sure did, but it is equally true (at least to Russian specialists) that many of the Chavista reforms were botched, a lot of them were a case of too little too late, and that it will take years to refloat the Venezuelan economy.

Finally, we are comparing apples to oranges here: the task of the AngloZionists is to destroy the Venezuelan economy while the Chinese and Russian task would be, at least in theory, to rescue it. Destroying is so much easier than building, that the entire comparison is logically flawed and fundamentally unfair.

I really mean no offense to the supporters of Hugo Chavez and his ideals (I very much include myself in this category) but anybody who has been to, or near, Venezuela will tell you that destitute Venezuelans are not only running out of the country in large numbers, but they also contribute to destabilize the neighboring states. So we should have no Pollyannish notions about all the reports about the economic and social collapse in Venezuela as only “US propaganda”. Sadly, much of it is true even if often exaggerated, lopsided and missing all the very real successes of the Chavez reforms, hence the continuous popular support, in spite of it all, the Maduro government continues to enjoy. Still, the overall picture is very bleak and it will take Venezuela consistent and correct action to recover from the current plight.

So is there still hope? Yes, absolutely!

I recently replied the following to a friend asking me about a possible Russian intervention in Venezuela “*I place my own hopes not in the Venezuelan military, or in Chinese or Russian help, but on the amazing ability of the US Americans to f*** up. At the end of the day, that is our biggest ally: the US stupidity, ignorance, arrogance and cowardice*”.

Think of what currently passes as a “policy” of the USA in Venezuela as a ***diagnostic tool***.

Not just to diagnose the moral degeneracy and mental pathology of the leaders of the AngloZionist Empire, but also to diagnose the very real state of despair and chaos of the Empire itself. Under Obama, for all his faults and weaknesses, the US succeeded in subverting a list of crucial Latin American countries (like Brazil or Argentina) but now, with Mr MAGA, it can't even do that. The kind of antics we see from the Pompeo, Bolton & Abrams gang is amazing in its crudeness and, frankly, makes a supposed "indispensable nation" look absolutely ridiculous. These losers already had to fold several times, in spite of equally hyperbolic threats delivered with maximal gravitas (think DPRK here), and yet they still think that crude bullying methods can yield success. They can't. Immense firepower is not a substitute for brains.

In its short and blood-soaked history, the USA has pretty much always acted like some criminal enterprise run by brutal gangsters, but in the past some of these gangsters could be extremely well educated and intelligent (think James Baker here). Today, their guns are still lying around (albeit in various states of disrepair), but they are wielded by ignorant retards. Yes, ignorant retards with guns can be very dangerous, but they can never be effective!

Conclusion

Right now the US, backed by its various colonies and vassal states, appears to be ready to deliver a death blow to Venezuela and, truth be told, they might be able to do just that. But, for whatever it is worth, my gut feeling is that they will fail again, even against the weakest countries of the Axis of Resistance. That is not to say that Venezuela is not in a heap of critical problems. But I believe that in spite of being in a critical condition, Venezuela will be able to bounce back, just like Syria did. After all, the Syrian example proves that it *is* possible to resist a superior invading force while at the same time successfully engaging in critically needed reforms. Yes, today's Caracas is in very bad shape, but the city of Aleppo was in a much worse shape until it was liberated, and now quasi-normal life has returned to it (in sharp contrast to the US liberated devastated city of Raqqa which [still lies in ruins](#)). Yankees (to use the usual Latin-American expression) are just like their Israeli overlords: they are capable of devastating violence but they have no staying power: if things don't go their way fast, really fast, they run and barricade themselves somewhere faraway from danger. In our case, they might even do what they did in Iraq and Afghanistan: build obscenely huge embassies, create a special zone around them, and sit tight while the country is engulfed in a bloody civil war. This way, they can provide CNN & Co. with

footage of a “peaceful neighborhood” while still claiming that the Stars and Stripes are still proudly flying high over the enemy’s capital and that “these colors don’t run”. This would be a disastrous outcome for the Venezuelan nation and this is why we all have to try to prevent this, by speaking out before the US further wrecks yet another country.

Hopefully the memory of past completely failed, humiliating and bloody invasions will convince the right people at the Pentagon to do whatever it takes to prevent the US from launching yet another stupid and immoral war of choice on behalf of the Neocons.

The Saker

Saker interview with Michael Hudson on Venezuela, February 7, 2019

February 06, 2019

Introduction: *There is a great deal of controversy about the true shape of the Venezuelan economy and whether Hugo Chavez' and Nicholas Maduro's reform and policies were crucial for the people of Venezuela or whether they were completely misguided and precipitated the current crises. Anybody and everybody seems to have very strong held views about this. But I don't simply because I lack the expertise to have any such opinions. So I decided to ask one of the most respected independent economists out there, Michael Hudson, for whom I have immense respect and whose analyses (including those he [co-authored with Paul Craig Roberts](#)) seem to be the most credible and honest ones you can find. In fact, Paul Craig Roberts considers Hudson the "[best economist in the world](#)"!*

I am deeply grateful to Michael for his replies which, I hope, will contribute to a honest and objective understanding of what really is taking place in Venezuela.
The Saker

The Saker: *Could you summarize the state of Venezuela's economy when Chavez came to power?*

Michael Hudson: Venezuela was an oil monoculture. Its export revenue was spent largely on importing food and other necessities that it could have produced at home. Its trade was largely with the United States. So despite its oil wealth, it ran up foreign debt.

From the outset, U.S. oil companies have feared that Venezuela might someday use its oil revenues to benefit its overall population instead of letting the U.S. oil industry and its local comprador aristocracy siphon off its wealth. So the oil industry – backed by U.S. diplomacy – held Venezuela hostage in two ways.

First of all, oil refineries were not built in Venezuela, but in Trinidad and in the southern U.S. Gulf Coast states. This enabled U.S. oil companies – or the U.S. Government – to leave Venezuela without a means of “going it alone” and pursuing an

independent policy with its oil, as it needed to have this oil refined. It doesn't help to have oil reserves if you are unable to get this oil refined so as to be usable.

Second, Venezuela's central bankers were persuaded to pledge their oil reserves and all assets of the state oil sector (including Citgo) as collateral for its foreign debt. This meant that if Venezuela defaulted (or was forced into default by U.S. banks refusing to make timely payment on its foreign debt), bondholders and U.S. oil majors would be in a legal position to take possession of Venezuelan oil assets.

These pro-U.S. policies made Venezuela a typically polarized Latin American oligarchy. Despite being nominally rich in oil revenue, its wealth was concentrated in the hands of a pro-U.S. oligarchy that let its domestic development be steered by the World Bank and IMF. The indigenous population, especially its rural racial minority as well as the urban underclass, was excluded from sharing in the country's oil wealth. The oligarchy's arrogant refusal to share the wealth, or even to make Venezuela self-sufficient in essentials, made the election of Hugo Chavez a natural outcome.

The Saker: Could you outline the various reforms and changes introduced by Hugo Chavez? What did he do right, and what did he do wrong?

Michael Hudson: Chavez sought to restore a mixed economy to Venezuela, using its government revenue – mainly from oil, of course – to develop infrastructure and domestic spending on health care, education, employment to raise living standards and productivity for his electoral constituency.

What he was unable to do was to clean up the embezzlement and built-in rake-off of income from the oil sector. And he was unable to stem the capital flight of the oligarchy, taking its wealth and moving it abroad – while running away themselves.

This was not “wrong”. It merely takes a long time to change an economy's disruption – while the U.S. is using sanctions and “dirty tricks” to stop that process.

The Saker: What are, in your opinion, the causes of the current economic crisis in Venezuela – is it primarily due to mistakes by Chavez and Maduro or is the main cause US sabotage, subversion and sanctions?

Michael Hudson: There is no way that's Chavez and Maduro could have pursued a pro-Venezuelan policy aimed at achieving economic independence without inciting fury, subversion and sanctions from the United States. American foreign policy

remains as focused on oil as it was when it invaded Iraq under Dick Cheney's regime. U.S. policy is to treat Venezuela as an extension of the U.S. economy, running a trade surplus in oil to spend in the United States or transfer its savings to U.S. banks.

By imposing sanctions that prevent Venezuela from gaining access to its U.S. bank deposits and the assets of its state-owned Citco, the United States is making it impossible for Venezuela to pay its foreign debt. This is forcing it into default, which U.S. diplomats hope to use as an excuse to foreclose on Venezuela's oil resources and seize its foreign assets much as Paul Singer hedge fund sought to do with Argentina's foreign assets.

Just as U.S. policy under Kissinger was to make Chile's "economy scream," so the U.S. is following the same path against Venezuela. It is using that country as a "demonstration effect" to warn other countries not to act in their self-interest in any way that prevents their economic surplus from being siphoned off by U.S. investors.

The Saker: What in your opinion should Maduro do next (assuming he stays in power and the USA does not overthrow him) to rescue the Venezuelan economy?

Michael Hudson: I cannot think of anything that President Maduro can do that he is not doing. At best, he can seek foreign support – and demonstrate to the world the need for an alternative international financial and economic system.

He already has begun to do this by trying to withdraw Venezuela's gold from the Bank of England and Federal Reserve. This is turning into "asymmetrical warfare," threatening to de-sanctify the dollar standard in international finance. The refusal of England and the United States to grant an elected government control of its foreign assets demonstrates to the entire world that U.S. diplomats and courts alone can and will control foreign countries as an extension of U.S. nationalism.

The price of the U.S. economic attack on Venezuela is thus to fracture the global monetary system. Maduro's defensive move is showing other countries the need to protect themselves from becoming "another Venezuela" by finding a new safe haven and paying agent for their gold, foreign exchange reserves and foreign debt financing, away from the dollar, sterling and euro areas.

The only way that Maduro can fight successfully is on the institutional level, upping the ante to move "outside the box." His plan – and of course it is a longer-term plan – is to help catalyze a new international economic order independent of the U.S. dollar

standard. It will work in the short run only if the United States believes that it can emerge from this fight as an honest financial broker, honest banking system and supporter of democratically elected regimes. The Trump administration is destroying that illusion more thoroughly than any anti-imperialist critic or economic rival could do!

Over the longer run, Maduro also must develop Venezuelan agriculture, along much the same lines that the United States protected and developed its agriculture under the New Deal legislation of the 1930s – rural extension services, rural credit, seed advice, state marketing organizations for crop purchase and supply of mechanization, and the same kind of price supports that the United States has long used to subsidize domestic farm investment to increase productivity.

The Saker: What about the plan to introduce a oil-based crypto currency? Will that be an effective alternative to the dying Venezuelan Bolivar?

Michael Hudson: Only a national government can issue a currency. A “crypto” currency tied to the price of oil would become a hedging vehicle, prone to manipulation and price swings by forward sellers and buyers. A national currency must be based on the ability to tax, and Venezuela’s main tax source is oil revenue, which is being blocked from the United States. So Venezuela’s position is like that of the German mark coming out of its hyperinflation of the early 1920s. The only solution involves balance-of-payments support. It looks like the only such support will come from outside the dollar sphere.

The solution to any hyperinflation must be negotiated diplomatically and be supported by other governments. My history of international trade and financial theory, *Trade, Development and Foreign Debt*, describes the German reparations problem and how its hyperinflation was solved by the Rentenmark.

Venezuela’s economic-rent tax would fall on oil, and luxury real estate sites, as well as monopoly prices, and on high incomes (mainly financial and monopoly income). This requires a logic to frame such tax and monetary policy. I have tried to explain how to achieve monetary and hence political independence for the past half-century. China is applying such policy most effectively. It is able to do so because it is a large and self-sufficient economy in essentials, running a large enough export surplus to pay for its food imports. Venezuela is in no such position. That is why it is looking to China for support at this time.

The Saker: How much assistance do China, Russia and Iran provide and how much can they do to help? Do you think that these three countries together can help counter-act US sabotage, subversion and sanctions?

Michael Hudson: None of these countries have a current capacity to refine Venezuelan oil. This makes it difficult for them to take payment in Venezuelan oil. Only a long-term supply contract (paid for in advance) would be workable. And even in that case, what would China and Russia do if the United States simply grabbed their property in Venezuela, or refused to let Russia's oil company take possession of Citco? In that case, the only response would be to seize U.S. investments in their own country as compensation.

At least China and Russia can provide an alternative bank clearing mechanism to SWIFT, so that Venezuela can bypass the U.S. financial system and keep its assets from being grabbed at will by U.S. authorities or bondholders. And of course, they can provide safe-keeping for however much of Venezuela's gold it can get back from New York and London.

Looking ahead, therefore, China, Russia, Iran and other countries need to set up a new international court to adjudicate the coming diplomatic crisis and its financial and military consequences. Such a court – and its associated international bank as an alternative to the U.S.-controlled IMF and World Bank – needs a clear ideology to frame a set of principles of nationhood and international rights with power to implement and enforce its judgments.

This would confront U.S. financial strategists with a choice: if they continue to treat the IMF, World Bank, ITO and NATO as extensions of increasingly aggressive U.S. foreign policy, they will risk isolating the United States. Europe will have to choose whether to remain a U.S. economic and military satellite, or to throw in its lot with Eurasia.

However, Daniel Yergin reports in the Wall Street Journal (Feb. 7) that China is trying to hedge its bets by opening a back-door negotiation with Guaido's group, apparently to get the same deal that it has negotiated with Maduro's government. But any such deal seems unlikely to be honored in practice, given U.S. animosity toward China and Guaido's total reliance on U.S. covert support.

The Saker: Venezuela kept a lot of its gold in the UK and money in the USA. How could Chavez and Maduro trust these countries or did they not have another choice? Are there viable alternatives to New York and London or are they still the “only game in town” for the world’s central banks?

Michael Hudson: There was never real trust in the Bank of England or Federal Reserve, but it seemed unthinkable that they would refuse to permit an official depositor from withdrawing its own gold. The usual motto is “Trust but verify.” But the unwillingness (or inability) of the Bank of England to verify means that the formerly unthinkable has now arrived: Have these central banks sold this gold forward in the post-London Gold Pool and its successor commodity markets in their attempt to keep down the price so as to maintain the appearance of a solvent U.S. dollar standard.

Paul Craig Roberts has described how this system works. There are forward markets for currencies, stocks and bonds. The Federal Reserve can offer to buy a stock in three months at, say, 10% over the current price. Speculators will buy the stock, bidding up the price, so as to take advantage of “the market’s” promise to buy the stock. So by the time three months have passed, the price will have risen. That is largely how the U.S. “Plunge Protection Team” has supported the U.S. stock market.

The system works in reverse to hold down gold prices. The central banks holding gold can get together and offer to sell gold at a *low* price in three months. “The market” will realize that with low-priced gold being sold, there’s no point in buying more gold and bidding its price up. So the forward-settlement market shapes today’s market.

The question is, have gold buyers (such as the Russian and Chinese government) bought so much gold that the U.S. Fed and the Bank of England have actually had to “make good” on their forward sales, and steadily depleted their gold? In this case, they would have been “living for the moment,” keeping down gold prices for as long as they could, knowing that once the world returns to the pre-1971 gold-exchange standard for intergovernmental balance-of-payments deficits, the U.S. will run out of gold and be unable to maintain its overseas military spending (not to mention its trade deficit and foreign disinvestment in the U.S. stock and bond markets). My book on Super-Imperialism explains why running out of gold forced the Vietnam War to an end. The same logic would apply today to America’s vast network of military bases throughout the world.

Refusal of England and the U.S. to pay Venezuela means that other countries' official gold reserves can be held hostage to U.S. foreign policy, and even to judgments by U.S. courts to award this gold to foreign creditors or to whoever might bring a lawsuit under U.S. law against these countries.

This hostage-taking now makes it urgent for other countries to develop a viable alternative, especially as the world de-dollarizes and a gold-exchange standard remains the only way of constraining the military-induced balance of payments deficit of the United States or any other country mounting a military attack. A military empire is very expensive – and gold is a “peaceful” constraint on military-induced payments deficits. (I spell out the details in my *Super Imperialism: The Economic Strategy of American Empire* (1972), updated in German as *Finanzimperium* (2017).

The U.S. has overplayed its hand in destroying the foundation of the dollar-centered global financial order. That order has enabled the United States to be “the exceptional nation” able to run balance-of-payments deficits and foreign debt that it has no intention (or ability) to pay, claiming that the dollars thrown off by its foreign military spending “supply” other countries with their central bank reserves (held in the form of loans to the U.S. Treasury – Treasury bonds and bills – to finance the U.S. budget deficit and its military spending, as well as the largely military U.S. balance-of-payments deficit.

Given the fact that the EU is acting as a branch of NATO and the U.S. banking system, that alternative would have to be associated with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the gold would have to be kept in Russia and/or China.

The Saker: What can other Latin American countries such as Bolivia, Nicaragua, Cuba and, maybe, Uruguay and Mexico do to help Venezuela?

Michael Hudson: The best thing neighboring Latin American countries can do is to join in creating a vehicle to promote de-dollarization and, with it, an international institution to oversee the writedown of debts that are beyond the ability of countries to pay without imposing austerity and thereby destroying their economies.

An alternative also is needed to the World Bank that would make loans in domestic currency, above all to subsidize investment in domestic food production so as to protect the economy against foreign food-sanctions – the equivalent of a military siege to force surrender by imposing famine conditions. This World Bank for Economic

Acceleration would put the development of self-reliance for its members first, instead of promoting export competition while loading borrowers down with foreign debt that would make them prone to the kind of financial blackmail that Venezuela is experiencing.

Being a Roman Catholic country, Venezuela might ask for papal support for a debt write-down and an international institution to oversee the ability to pay by debtor countries without imposing austerity, emigration, depopulation and forced privatization of the public domain.

Two international principles are needed. First, no country should be obliged to pay foreign debt in a currency (such as the dollar or its satellites) whose banking system acts to prevent payment.

Second, no country should be obliged to pay foreign debt at the price of losing its domestic autonomy as a state: the right to determine its own foreign policy, to tax and to create its own money, and to be free of having to privatize its public assets to pay foreign creditors. Any such debt is a “bad loan” reflecting the creditor’s own irresponsibility or, even worse, pernicious asset grab in a foreclosure that was the whole point of the loan.

The Saker: Thank you very much for taking the time to reply to my questions!

The Tulsi Gabbard phenomenon as a diagnostic tool

February 15, 2019

Ever since Tulsi Gabbard announced that she will be running for President in 2020 her personality and candidacy have been a subject of heated debates and after I posted [a rather small message from her](#), I have been getting panicked emails warning me that she is a fake and that I should not “jump on her bandwagon” or otherwise endorse her.

So, first and foremost, I am not – repeat NOT – endorsing her in any way shape or fashion.

However, I do find her and what is taking place around her extremely interesting and I want to look at it a little closer. This won't be a review or analysis of her ideas, political platform or chance of getting elected. Neither will I try to read her mind and do what so many other folks are doing and confidently declare that I know what her true values, ideas or plans are. I don't.

But there are a few things which can already be observed about her which I want to comment on.

First, one might imagine that she would be the *dream* candidate for the Democratic Party: she is a female, she is not White, she has impeccable “patriotic” credentials, she is obviously both very good looking and very smart, she does not have any skeletons in her past (at least none that we know of for the time being) and she is not associated with the notorious Clinton gang. So what's there not to like about her if you are a Democrat?

Well, as we all saw, the putatively “liberal” legacy Ziomeia hates Tulsi Gabbard with a passion. Maybe not as much as that legacy Ziomeia hates Trump or Putin, but still – the levels of hostility against her are truly amazing. This may seem bizarre until you realize that, just like Donald Trump, Tulsi Gabbard has said all the right things about Israel, but that this was not nearly “enough” to please the US Ziolobby. Check out the kind of discussions about Gabbard which can be found in the Israeli and pro-Israeli press:

- <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-tulsi-gabbard-the-pro-assad-iraq-war-vet-critical-of-israel-loved-by-adelson-evangelicals-1.6831029>
- <https://www.jpost.com/American-Politics/Democratic-presidential-contender-Gabbard-supports-and-criticizes-Israel-577149>
- <https://www.jpost.com/American-Politics/Ex-KKK-head-David-Duke-praises-Tulsi-Gabbard-because-she-wont-put-Israel-first-579917>
- <https://www.timesofisrael.com/democrat-gabbard-who-slammed-israel-for-live-fire-use-in-gaza-to-run-in-2020/>
- <https://www.jns.org/record-at-a-glance-hawaii-rep-tulsi-gabbard-on-the-middle-east-in-her-bid-for-president/>
- <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/rep-tulsi-gabbard-who-met-syrian-president-bashar-assad-announces-2020-presidential-bid>

This is just a small sample of what I found with a quick search. It could be summed up “Gabbard is not pro-Israel enough”. But is that really The Main Reason for such a hostility towards her?

I don't think so.

I believe that Gabbard's real “ultimate sin” is that she is against foreign wars of choice. That is really her Crime Of Crimes!

The AngloZionists wanted to tear Syria apart, break it up into small pieces, most of which would be run by Takfiri crazies and Tulsi Gabbard actually dared to go and speak to “animal Assad”, the (latest) “New Hitler”, who “gasses his own people”. And this is an even worse crime, if such a thing can even be imagined! She dared to *disobey* her AngloZionist masters.

So, apparently, opposing illegal wars and daring to disobey the Neocons are crimes of such magnitude and evil that they deserve the hysterical Gabbard-bashing campaign which we have witnessed in recent times. And even being non-Christian, non-White, non-male and “liberal” does not in any way compensate for the heinous nature of “crimes”.

What does this tell us about the real nature of the US society?

It is also interesting to note that the most vicious (and stupid) attacks against Gabbard did *not* come from “conservative” media outlets or journalists. Not at all! Most of the attacks, especially the more vicious ones, came from supposedly “liberal”

sources, which tell us that in 2019 USA “liberals” do not refer to folks with liberal ideas, but to folks who are hell-bent on imperialism and war; folks who don’t care one bit about any real “liberal” values and who use a pseudo-liberal rhetoric to advocate for war outside the USA and for a plutocratic dictatorship inside the USA.

As for Gabbard herself, she already managed to publicly back-peddle to one obnoxious lobby (the homo lobby) on the issue of marriage (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) and I fully expect her to cave in to the Zio-lobby just like Trump has been doing every day since he made it to the White House. Apparently, US public figures like Gabbard and Trump still don’t understand the simple fact that NO amount of groveling will EVER appease the Neocons or the Ziolobby (see [here](#) for a perfect example of that attitude from Commentary).

[Sidebar: this entire business about Rep. Ilhan Omar also illustrated something very crucial to Donald Trump’s personality. Let me explain:

In the bad old days of the Soviet Union, one of the tricks used by the prison/camp administration to break a prisoner (be he political or not) was to stick him into a cell with the so-called “roosters”. In the slang of the Russian criminal underworld, the “roosters” are the very lowest category of prisoners (in what is a rather complex hierarchy): “roosters” are either homosexuals, rapists, child molesters or men who have been down-ranked (“lowered” in slang) to that status as a punishment for some kind of action which the criminals consider reprehensible (like interacting with other “roosters”, mistakenly sitting down next to one, not repaying a card-debt, etc.). I won’t go into all the details here, but suffice to say that one thing which was well known in the Soviet jails/camps is that somebody who has committed some kind of trespass can be “lowered” to the status of “rooster” and that the prison/camp administration often uses these man as “combat roosters” – they send them to attack and even rape some prisoner who needs to be broken. And, needless to say, after you have been raped by such “roosters” you yourself get that status for the rest of your life.

What Trump did in the case of Rep. Ilhan Omar is act like a “lowered combat rooster”, sent to abuse somebody else on the behalf of the prison/camp administration. Of all people, Trump ought to know that accusations of anti-Semitism are absolutely, total hogwash. This is just a verbal whip used by AIPAC/ADL/etc to beat up their opponents. In fact, all Omar did was to say on Twitter that some members of Congress support Israel because they are collecting money from Jewish groups like the

American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Duh?! Is that really news to anybody? Even Trump himself mentioned that during this campaign.

By the way, check out how Rep. Ilhan Omar grills that sorry SOB Abrams here: <http://thesaker.is/rep-ilhan-omar-vs-elliott-abrams/> . This young lady clearly has more courage and integrity than all her colleagues taken together!

But the Neocons have now “lowered” Trump to the status of “rooster” and he now is acting like a willing “combat rooster” for those who “lowered” him to that status, which makes Trump the worst and most despised kind of “rooster”: one who willingly serves his own rapists. See for yourself:

https://youtu.be/liwF_8r-MCg

The amazing thing is that Trump seems to be completely oblivious to how utterly dishonorable, spineless, subservient, weak and cowardly he looks every time he tries to so crudely brown-nose the Neocons. Apparently being a narcissist does not include the ability to be aware of how others might see you.]

In fact, one of two things are most likely to happen next:

1. Tulsi Gabbard remains true to her ideals and views and she gets no money for her campaign
2. Tulsi Gabbard caves in to the Neocons and the Deep State and she become another Obama/Trump

Okay, in theory, a third option is possible (never say never!) but I see that as highly unlikely: Tulsi Gabbard follows in the footsteps of Trump and gets elected in spite of a massive media hate-campaign against her and once she makes it to the White House she does what Trump failed to do and appeals directly to the people of the USA to back her in a ruthless campaign to “drain the swamp” (meaning showing the door to the Neocons and their Deep State). This is what Putin did, at least partially, when he came to power, by the way. Frankly, for all her very real qualities she does not strike me as a “US Putin” nor does she have the kind of institutional and popular backing Putin had. So while I will never say never, I am not holding my breath on this one...

Finally, if Gabbard truly is “for real” then the Deep State will probably “Kennedy” her and blame Russia or Iran for it.

Still, while we try to understand what, if anything, Tulsi Gabbard could do for the world, she does do good posting messages like this one:

https://youtu.be/e_uRU5BYlpk

I don't know about you, but I am rather impressed!

At the very least, she does what "Occupy Wall Street" did with its "1%" which was factually wrong. The actual percentage was much lower but politically very effective. In this case, Gabbard speaks of both parties being alike and she popularizes concepts like "*warmongers in ivory towers thinking up new wars to wage and new places for people to die*". This is all very good and useful for the cause of peace and anti-imperialism because **when crimethink concepts become mainstream, then the mainstream is collapsing!**

The most important achievement of Tulsi Gabbard, at least so far, has been to prove that the so-called "liberals" don't give a damn about race, don't give a damn about gender, don't give a damn about minorities, don't give a damn about "thanking our veterans" or anything else. They don't even care about Israel all that much. But what they do care about is power, Empire and war. That they *really* care about. Tulsi Gabbard is the living proof that the US Democrats and other pretend "liberals" are hell bent on power, empire and war. They also will stop at nothing to prevent the USA from (finally!) becoming a "normal" country and they couldn't care less about the fate of the people of the USA. All they want is for us all to become their serfs.

All of this is hardly big news. But this hysterical reaction to Gabbard's candidacy is a very powerful and useful proof of the fact that the USA is a foreign-occupied country with no real sovereignty or democracy. As for the US media, it would make folks like [Suslov](#) or Goebbels green with envy. Be it [the ongoing US aggression against Venezuela](#) or the reaction to the Tulsi Gabbard phenomenon, the diagnostics concur and we can use the typical medical euphemism and say with confidence: "the prognosis is poor".

The Saker

The Saker interviews Jorge Valero, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

February 19, 2019

I am continuing to try to understand what is really happening in Venezuela by talking to those who actually know and, following my [interview with Michael Hudson](#), today it is my immense privilege and honor to present you with a full interview I had with His Excellency Mr. Jorge Valero, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

I am immensely grateful to Ambassador Valero for taking the time to answer my questions in extenso just a few days away from what might well turn out to be a US false flag or even invasion of Venezuela (promised to all by Trump and Guaido [for the 23rd of February](#)). May God grant him and the Venezuelan people the wisdom, courage and strength to defeat the Empire!

The Saker

The Saker: My first question is about you personally. There is a Wikipedia entry under your name (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jorge_Valero) but since Wikipedia is, at best, a hit-and-miss kind of source, what could you tell our readers about yourself which they ought to know before we turn to the issue of the current situation in Venezuela?

Ambassador Valero: I was born in Valera, State of Trujillo, Venezuela on November 8th, 1946. I graduated from the University of Los Andes (ULA, for its acronym in Spanish) as a historian. I did my graduate studies at the University College London, in Latin American Studies. I am an expert in diplomatic archives. I was an undergraduate professor at the University of Los Andes and a graduate professor at the Central University of Venezuela (UCV, for its acronym in Spanish). I was elected as a Congressman to the Legislative Assembly of the State of Trujillo, and later Congressman to the National Congress. I was Venezuela's Ambassador to the Korean Republic. When, President Chávez, was elected in 1998; he appointed me as Deputy

Minister of Foreign Affairs. I presided over the Presidential Commission appointed by President Chávez, which was in charge of organizing the II OPEC Summit, in Caracas on September 2000. I have been Ambassador – Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the OAS; the UN – New York and currently to the UNOG. I have written a literary work in various genres. More than 20 essays; poetry; diplomacy and social-political analysis. Dozens of national and international conferences.

The Saker: One of the major efforts of Hugo Chavez was to establish a number of multi-lateral frameworks and agreements like the ALBA, CELAC, UNASUR, and projects like the SUCRE, the Petrocaribe, TeleSUR and PetroSUR. How effective have these frameworks and projects been in supporting the Venezuelan struggle against US imperialism? Do you feel that these entities are playing a helpful role or not?

Ambassador Valero: Hugo Chávez was a paradigm of Latin American and Caribbean integration. In this regard, he was a key factor in the creation of ALBA, UNASUR, CELAC, PETROCARIBE, and TELESUR. Chávez reclaimed the integrationist ideology of our Liberator Simón Bolívar, who prosed the creation of “*La Patria Grande, Nuestroamericana*” (Our Great American Homeland), to defend the interests of our peoples and face any foreign threat raising the flags of unity, peace, sovereignty and self-determination of the peoples. PETROCARIBE is a solidary initiative in favor of developing countries, notably, the countries of our Caribbean surroundings that benefit from an oil bill with discounts and with long payment terms. Chávez has also been a paradigm in the promotion of a multi-polar world, where foreign affairs are founded by sovereign equality of States, overcoming the decaying North American Empire unilateralism. Thus, the Empire’s fury has been unleashed against the Bolivarian Revolution: coups d’état, oil sabotage, the promotion of violence and terrorism against the Venezuelan people. Hence, the continuous coup d’état promoted by the supremacist-racist-xenophobic and war-mongering government of Donald Trump that aims to impose a governing puppet and the threats of a military invasion in our homeland, which are part of the above-described context.

Hugo Chávez advocated for a new type and renewed multilateralism. Respect for the founding principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Multilateralism is disrupted by Trump’s government, which has disregarded universal agreements on climate change; withdrawn from both UNESCO and the Human Rights Council; disregarded the agreement on the peaceful use of atomic energy with

Iran, (signed by USA, Germany, France, United Kingdom, China and the European Union); retraced the path to normalizing the bilateral relations with Cuba; unleashed a commercial war against China, and threatens the Russian Federation with an atomic war in his dispute to control outer space. Vis-à-vis those reckless and aggressive policies that threaten human existence, it is necessary to raise the flags of multilateralism even higher.

The Saker: The Empire has created the so-called “Lima Group” which is just a typical trick to bypass the UN or legitimate regional organizations. This is exactly what the USA did with the so-called “friends of Syria,” and the goal is the same: to overthrow a democratically elected legitimate government and replace it with a vassal puppet regime. Yet countries like Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru all agreed to participate in this anti-Venezuelan farce. How do you explain such a betrayal by so many of these Latin American countries? Does their agreement to betray Venezuela and serve the Empire’s interest not show that these states have no real sovereignty or foreign policy and that they are all de-facto US colonies?

Ambassador Valero: Certainly, the self-proclaimed “Lima Group” is a cartel made up of satellite governments of the imperial government to break Latin American and Caribbean unity, and, due to the failure of using the Ministry of the Colonies, which is the OAS, to isolate Venezuela in this organization. The empire and its minions couldn’t approve Article 20 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter of the Permanent Council of the OAS and resorted to the United Nations Security Council, where they also failed. The creation of puppet governments by the US is not new. It has happened in Iraq, Iran, Libya, and Syria. The puppets imposed in those countries were supported by armed terrorist groups, including mercenary armies trained and financed from abroad.

Nevertheless, in Venezuela, the puppet has no support from the people nor the military, since in our country there is a consistent and patriotic civilian-military alliance, which guarantees and will guarantee -come what may- the defense of the sovereign and sacred jurisdiction of Simon Bolivar’s homeland. The US satellite governments against Venezuela are a minority even in Latin America and the Caribbean. Of the 193 countries that make up the United Nations only 34 support the puppet, which translates into 17.6%; a single country in Africa and there are 54; one in Oceania and there are 15; one in the Middle East and there are 16. 15 countries in

Europe, and there are 50; and 16 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and there are 35. You are right, the satellite countries that follow the Empire's orders have no autonomous and sovereign foreign policy. Some of these governments, particularly in Latin America, are presided by people that have a criminal background: drug trafficking, corruption, genocide, para-militarism, sexual offenses. Some are the result of a coup d'état.

The Saker: Another interesting initiative was the creation of Petro-cryptocurrency. Now with the inflation making the Bolivar almost useless, how effective do you believe this alternative currency is to 1) bypass US sanctions and sabotage and 2) serve as an alternative currency to help the Venezuelan economy recover from its current plight?

Ambassador Valero: The Petro-cryptocurrency was created to free us from the tyranny of the US dollar in the international financial market. Therefore, Trump's government has established Draconian measures to block the flow of this cryptocurrency. Incidentally, the economic war and the unilateral coercive measures bring about galloping inflation, migration and relocation of people abroad. We are blocked from accessing the capital markets. They rob the Venezuelan State's property in the US. They kidnap the Venezuelan State's bank accounts in that country. The unilateral coercive measures and the sanctions cause, as expressed by the former UN Independent Expert, Alfred de Zayas, death and suffering; measures against international law and the Charter of the United Nations and deny the Venezuelan people their human rights. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on unilateral coercive measures, Idriss Jazairy acknowledged this.

The Saker: Russia and China have been working on an alternative to the SWIFT. Is that something the Venezuelan government is also looking into?

Ambassador Valero: Experts from China and Russia provide expert advice to the Venezuelan State to successfully overcome the financial blockage and criminal sanctions of Trump's government.

The Saker: What can you tell us about the current state of the Venezuelan petrochemicals industry? Now that the US has stolen 7 BILLION dollars belonging to PDVSA, how can the PDVSA continue to operate after being robbed from such a huge sum of money? At what levels is Venezuela currently producing and refining oil?

Ambassador Valero: The damage caused to the Venezuelan economy surpasses 35 billion dollars in the blockade of assets and accounts. They try to rob the Venezuelan peoples from the company CITGO that operates in Dallas, Texas that distributes gasoline and fuels to thousands of gas stations in the US East Coast. The Bolivarian government will undertake all the necessary legal actions to avoid that the Trump government steals the national patrimony. PDVSA, our national oil company, is completely deployed to guarantee the production, distribution, and commercialization of our crude oil. We have found new partners in the hydrocarbon's market in the world, mainly, China, Russia, India, and Turkey.

The Saker: Since the US-backed coup attempt by Guaido, there has been remarkably little actual violence in the streets of Venezuela, and all the signs point to the fact that Guaido does not have the support of a majority of the people. Yet he sure does have enough support within some sectors of the Venezuelan society (the kind of folks who go and protest against Nicolas Maduro while carrying US flags). How did the government succeed in preventing that minority from doing in Venezuela what was done in Libya and Syria: instigate enough violence to justify a "humanitarian" foreign intervention? In Kiev, there were snipers shooting at both the security forces and the protesters (which also happened in Caracas in 2002 I believe), and I was expecting that to happen in Caracas, but it did not (at least so far). How do you explain this?

Ambassador Valero: Since the National Constituent Assembly was elected, peace reigns in the republic.

The puppet that the US aims to impose has neither the people nor the military's support to disrupt public peace. In general, in Venezuela, there is peace and tranquility. The Venezuelan people love peace. Peace is an essential part of State policies. Nevertheless, terrorist and violent groups financed from abroad, especially, the USA and Colombia act in popular districts in some cities in the country. The puppet and the puppeteer, Trump's government, try to disrupt public peace. They call to destroy the democratic rule of law and justice in Venezuela. They refuse to dialogue and promote intolerance and violence. The puppet asks the puppeteer to send US troops to invade our homeland. Infertile calls since our people remain ready to defend our participatory and protagonist democracy, as well as, the democratic institutions.

Trump's government tries to reproduce the format that the Empire used in Syria and Libya: a parallel transition government. They prepare mercenaries in neighboring

countries to foray in the national territory. They aimed to use the OAS and the Human Rights Council. Remember that Libya was expelled from the Human Rights Council through a Resolution, which was later confirmed by the UN General Assembly immediately after a Resolution was approved in the Security Council, which approved the creation of a no-fly zone. What followed is well known: cask missiles against Libya that caused thousands of deaths and destruction in civilian and military infrastructure. Trump's government wants to implement the same strategy against Venezuela. He has called upon the Security Council to validate his objective for a military invasion in Venezuela. Fortunately, for both world and regional peace, the governments of Russia and China declared that they would use their right to veto in the UN Security Council to block such criminal objective.

Peace in our region is crucial. CELAC proclaimed Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace. A military invasion from Trump's government in Venezuela will have continental and worldwide consequences. President Nicolás Maduro affirmed that a Yankee invasion would create a new Vietnam.

The Saker: Does Venezuela feel sufficiently supported at the UN in general and at the UNSC specifically by Russia and China or do you feel that Venezuela needs more help from these countries?

Ambassador Valero: Russia and China are Venezuela's strategic allies. With these two military, commercial, and technological powers we have cooperation agreements in many fields. Likewise, Venezuela has abundant solidarity, backing and support from most of the countries in the world.

On January 26, 2019, Trump's government intended to condemn Venezuela in the Security Council. They ran off with their tails between their legs, since no resolution was approved against our country. Most of the permanent and non-permanent members of this Council rejected the interventionist objective, and, contrarily approved to promote dialogue among Venezuelans. We are in a condition to overcome *motu proprio* our challenges. The dialogue between the government and the opposition, without preconditions, is the path to follow. Henceforth, our government has enthusiastically supported the "Montevideo Mechanism" proposed by the governments of Mexico, Uruguay, Bolivia and the member countries of CARICOM.

The Saker: It is pretty obvious that Mr. Guaido has committed a number of violations of the Venezuelan law ranging from calling for an illegal demonstration to

being involved in an anti-constitutional coup attempt. In a normal situation, that man ought to be legally charged and prosecuted for his crimes (including, in my opinion, subversion and treason). Yet the USA threatened to go to war against Venezuela (aka “serious consequences”) if Guaido is arrested which, by itself, is a gross violation of international law and of the UN Charter. What can, in your opinion, the Venezuelan government do to restore law and order without risking providing a pretext for a US invasion?

Ambassador Valero: The puppet has continuously violated the Bolivarian Constitution. Likewise, he disregarded the fundamental tenets of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. The Venezuelan State is made up of five powers. If something has to be characterized, the Bolivarian government is a devoted defender of the independence of each of those powers. It will be the National Constituent Assembly and the Public Ministry who will make the necessary decisions. And you are right: these are crimes of subversion and treason. Breaking democratic legality and wrongfully usurping functions should not be tolerated.

The puppet's permanent calls for violence and destabilization, his self-proclamation in a street in Caracas, and his call for a foreign military intervention place him against all national and international law. This makes him a criminal that should be punished with the force of the Venezuelan laws.

The Saker: Speaking of a possible US invasion – do you believe that these are just the usual empty threats of Donald Trump or do you think that there is actually a real risk of overt US military aggression against your country? How about the covert aggression already taking place? What can you tell us about US/Colombian (some say Israeli?) covert operations against Venezuela?

Ambassador Valero: Donald Trump's threats are not empty. The aggression is in full swing. Trump is the bombastic spokesman of war and foreign intervention. His threats are part of the Empire's recolonizing goals. The government of Uncle Sam's nation and its allies and lackeys impose neoliberal policies on the peoples of the world. Trump dusted off the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary. It recruits and trains mercenaries in its military bases in Colombia. He prepares his arsenal to wage war against Venezuela. This is why we should turn a blind eye to provocations. The governments of the US and Colombia are experts in creating false positives.

We insist: the threat of a military foray by the empire is a possibility that should not be ruled out. Both our people and our National Bolivarian Armed Forces (FANB, for its acronym in Spanish) are prepared to react with heroism and determination in case of such an event. Patriotism has rekindled as never before in history. We are ready to guarantee our definite independence.

Venezuela became the subject of discussion in the whole world. Our natural wealth, our geographic location in the American hemisphere, our political tenet of building a model of society where social justice prevails, our relations of solidarity and cooperation with the other countries of the world, our firm decision of being a free and sovereign country, emancipated from all sorts of domination make us –as people say- the crown jewel.

The Saker: It is pretty clear that the Israelis have never forgiven Hugo Chavez for speaking up for Palestinian rights and for openly denouncing Israeli policies. As far as you know, are the Israelis currently involved in anti-Venezuelan activities including economic sabotage, political subversion, covert operations, etc.? How relevant is Israel in what is going on today?

Ambassador Valero: The Israeli government has nothing to forgive us for. Our condition of sovereign country grants us the right to decide how we relate to other countries in the world. Defending the Palestinian cause is in the center of our foreign policy. We denounce in multilateral for Israel's genocide against the Palestinian people. Demanded the cessation of the occupation of the Gaza Strip, to end the extermination policy of Israel against Palestine and the Occupied Arab Territories. We recognize Palestine as a free and sovereign country with which we hold strong bonds of cooperation. There lies Israel's hatred against the Bolivarian Revolution. It is no news that this government is involved in the interventionist plans against our country. The Israeli government bets on the overthrowing of President Nicolás Maduro, by Donald Trump's government. It has recognized his puppet.

The Saker: Finally, what is your guess as to what will happen in the short-term to mid-term future? Do you believe that the Guaido coup has already failed or do you believe that this was only a temporary setback for the Empire and that now we will see more and further attempts at crushing the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela and the rest of Latin America?

Ambassador Valero: The civilian-military union is categorically defeating the coup d'état. Nevertheless, the empire will not stop in its destabilizing and coup-mongering pretensions against the Bolivarian Revolution. As it has been demonstrated, our people are inspired by the legacy of our liberators and the supreme commander Hugo Chávez Frías. And at the avant-garde of the fight for our sovereignty and self-determination is President Nicolás Maduro. *Chavismo* is the new face of being Venezuelan.

The Venezuelan people will resist with heroism and patriotic spirit the constant siege of Trump's government. The Bolivarian Revolution conceived a new nation project, which aims to obtain happiness, equality, equity, freedom, and brotherhood of all Venezuelans. These are inherent principles of our democracy and the Venezuelan way of socialism.

The Venezuelan people have resisted with dignity and stoicism the terrible conditions it has been subjected to due to the imperial pretensions impeding the advance of our revolutionary process. No foreign power and its domestic pawns will be able to stop the triumphal march of the Bolivarian Revolution.

The Saker: Your Excellency, thank you for granting me this interview!

Maduro 1: Abrams 0: but this match is far from over...

February 28, 2019

Maduro wins the first round

The standoff between Venezuela and the AngloZionist Empire last week-end has clearly ended in what can only be called a total defeat for Elliott Abrams. While we will never know what was initially planned by the demented minds of the Neocons, what we do know is that nothing critical happened: no invasion, not even any major false flag operation. The most remarkable facet of the standoff is how little effect all the AngloZionist propaganda has had inside Venezuela. There were clashes, including some rather violent ones, across the border, but nothing much happened in the rest of the country. Furthermore, while a few senior officers and a few soldiers did commit treason and joined forces with the enemy, the overwhelming majority of the Venezuelan military remained faithful to the Constitution. Finally, it appears that Maduro and his ministers were successful in devising a strategy combining roadblocks, a concert on the Venezuelan side, and the minimal but effective use of riot police to keep the border closed. Most remarkably, “unidentified snipers” did not appear to shoot at both sides (a favorite tactic of the Empire to justify its interventions). I give the credit for this to whatever Venezuelan (or allied) units were in charge of counter-sniper operations along the border.

Outside Venezuela this first confrontation has also been a defeat for the Empire. Not only did most countries worldwide not recognize the AngloZionist puppet, but the level of protest and opposition to what appeared to be the preparations for a possible invasion (or, at least, a military operation of some kind) was remarkably high, while the legacy corporate Ziomeia did what it always does (that is whatever the Empire wants it to do), the Internet and the blogosphere were overwhelmingly opposed to a direct US intervention. This situation also created a great deal of internal political tensions in various Latin American countries whose public opinion remains strongly opposed to any form of US imperial control over Latin America.

In this respect, the situation with Brazil is particularly interesting. While the Brazilian government fully backed the US coup attempt, the Brazilian military was most uncomfortable with this. My contacts in Brazil had correctly predicted that the Brazilian military would refuse to attack Venezuela and, eventually, the Brazilians even issued [a statement to that effect](#).

Alas, there are still plenty of US puppet regimes in Latin America to mindlessly do whatever Uncle Shmuel wants them to (Colombia would be the worst offender, of course, but there are others). But that is not the main problem here.

The main problem is that the Neocons cannot accept defeat and that they are likely to do what they always do, double down and make a bad situation even worse. The head of the Russian Security Council, [Nikolai Patrushev, has warned](#) that the US has deployed special forces in Colombia and Puerto Rico in preparation for a possible invasion. Uncharacteristically, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs made intelligence information public, which described in some detail what kind of plans the Empire and its allies had, even before this past week-end's confrontation. See for yourself:

<https://youtu.be/UhwjgqH4c04>

In fact, the leaders of the Empire and their puppets are not making any secrets about their determination to overthrow the constitutional government and replace it with the kind of *comprador* regime the US already imposed in Colombia. Pompeo, Abrams and Pence have been particularly hysterical in their threats, but the entire "Lima Group" is still at it:

<https://youtu.be/f66qrnNwdUE>

As for the Russian UN Ambassador, he was very clear on what Russia expects to happen next:

<https://youtu.be/5Gmf5jx8KuY>

The Neocons are not even content to threaten Venezuela, and John Bolton could not help himself and [publicly threatened Nicaragua](#) as being next in line for a US-sponsored regime change. He even spoke of a "[Troika of Tyranny](#)" reminiscent of the famous "[Axis of Evil](#)".

This is all hardly surprising: US politicians always resort to infantile comic-book kind of language when they want to give their threats a special gravitas. Next we will be told that Maduro is a "New Hitler" and that he is "genociding his own people", possibly with chemical weapons ("highly likely", no doubt!). If not that, then Maduro will be distributing Viagra to his forces [to help them rape more women](#). To those puzzled by the fact that presumably adult politicians use the kind of language one

could find in grade school, I can only say that this just reflects the state of the political discourse in the USA, which has been dumbed-down to an incredibly low level. Be careful, however, because while US politicians are rather comical in their infantile, ignorant, illiteracy, and while they have an almost perfect record of embarrassing failures, the past decades have also shown that they are quite capable of murderous rampages (in Iraq alone the US invasion resulted in over one million dead Iraqi civilians) or of wrecking even a very prosperous country (which Libya under Muammar Gaddafi definitely was).

Next, the Empire will probably strike-back

There is a small chance that Abrams & Co. will conclude that the situation in Venezuela is a total mess and that the Empire cannot capitalize on it in the short to middle term. This is possible, yes, but also highly unlikely.

The truth is that Mr MAGA and his Neocon puppet-masters have failed, at least so far at absolutely everything they tried. And if taking on China, Russia, Iran or even Syria is no easy task, Venezuela is by far the most fragile country in what could be called the “Resistance countries”: Venezuela is far away from its allies (except Cuba), it is surrounded by more or less hostile countries (especially Colombia), its economy is crippled by US sanctions and sabotage and its armed forces are dwarfed by the immense firepower the Empire has available in the region. Add to this the truly demonic mindset of Neocons like Abrams and the future for Venezuela looks bleak.

The good news is that the Colombians and the rest of the Lima Group “friends of Venezuela” probably don’t have the military power to take on Venezuela by themselves. The preferred option for the USA would be to use the Colombians like the KLA was used in Kosovo or how al-Qaeda (and derivatives) were used against Syria: as boots on the ground while the US provides airpower, electronic warfare capabilities, intelligence, bomb and missile strikes, etc. The US also has immense naval capabilities which could be used to assist (and, of course, direct) any military operations against Venezuela (I highly recommend [this analysis](#) by my friend Nat South who describes in some detail the US naval capabilities and operations in the region).

My gut feeling is that this approach will not work. As is often the case, the US has all sorts of impressive capabilities except for the main one: a military force capable of providing the boots on the ground (as opposed to a non-US proxy). The problem for

the US military would not be so much getting in, as staying inside and getting something done before leaving – what the US calls an “exit strategy”. And here, there are really no good options for the US.

It is therefore far more likely that the US will use the weapon which it truly masters better than anybody else on earth: corruption.

There is big money, really big money, all around the Venezuelan crisis: not only oil money, but also drug money. And there are a lot of truly evil and corrupt people involved in this struggle who will use that corruption-weapon with devastating effect against the constitutionally elected government. And, just to make things worse, Venezuela is already devastated by corruption. Still, there are quite a few factors which might well save Venezuela from being reconquered by the Empire.

First, while US Neocons are too arrogant to bother with anybody’s opinion except their own, and while the various US agencies primarily talk with the immensely wealthy rulers of Colombia and the rest of Latin America, it does appear that a strong majority of Venezuelans support their elected government. Furthermore, US leaders simply don’t understand how hated the “Yankees” are in Latin America (at least among the masses, not the comprador elites) and how fantastically offensive the appointment of a felon like Elliott Abrams as Envoy to Venezuela is to the vast majority of the people of this continent.

Second, Hugo Chavez and Nicolas Maduro did empower, for the very first time, the masses of the Venezuelan people, especially those who lived in abject poverty when Venezuela was still a US colony. These people are under no illusion about what a Guaido regime would mean to them. And while most of the supporters of Chavez and Maduro are not influential or wealthy, there are a lot of them and they will probably fight to prevent a complete reversal of all the achievements of the Bolivarian revolution.

Third, Latin America might well be changing, just like the Middle-East did. Remember how, for years, the Israelis could attack their neighbors with quasi-total impunity and how poorly the Arab armies performed? That suddenly changed when Hezbollah proved to the entire region and even the world, that the “Axis of Kindness” (USA, Israel, KSA) could be successfully defeated, even by a comparatively tiny resistance with no air force, no navy and very little armor. As I never cease to repeat – **wars are not won by firepower, but by willpower.** Oh sure, firepower helps,

especially when you can fire from far away with no risk to yourself and your victim cannot fire back, but as soon as big firepower is met by big willpower the former rapidly fails. There is a very real possibility that Venezuela might do for Latin America what the Ukraine did for Russia: act as a surprisingly effective “vaccine” against the AngloZionist propaganda. An indigenous leader like Evo Morales, who has declared his full and total support for the elected government of Maduro, is an inspiration to the people of Latin America far beyond the borders of Bolivia. The Russian ambassador to the UN got it right: there are already other leaders after Maduro which the AngloZionists want to eliminate and replace by a pliable puppet *à la* Guaido or Duque Márquez. At the end of the day, this is a typical dialectical problem: the more brutal and overt the US aggression against Latin America is, the more successful coups or even invasions the US organizes, the stronger the anti-Yankee feelings generated among the people of the continent. Think of it this way: the US has already terminally alienated the people of China, Russia and Iran, along with most of the Arab and Muslim world, and thanks to that alienation, the leaders of China, Russia and Iran have enjoyed the support of their people in their struggle against the AngloZionist Empire. Could something very similar not already be happening in Latin America?

Conclusion: focus on the right question

To defeat the Empire’s plans for Venezuela, it is crucial that we all keep hammering over and over again: the choice is not between Maduro or Guaido, the choice is not between poverty under the Chavistas and prosperity under the AngloZionists. This is how the agents of the Empire (whether paid or simply stupid) want to frame the discussions. **The real issue at stake here is the rule of law.** The rule of law inside Venezuela, of course, and the rule of law internationally.

First year law students are often taught that the **purpose of the law is not “justice” per se, but to provide a mechanism to solve disputes. That mechanism is, admittedly, a highly imperfect one, but it is understood by civilized people as being preferable to the alternative.** The alternative, by the way, is what happens every time; a so-called “humanitarian intervention” is launched: a humanitarian disaster.

Yet, this is the typical *modus operandi* of the Neocons (and of all imperialists, really). First, chose a country for destabilization, then use your control of the international financial markets and trade to trigger an economic crisis; then, send your “democracy promoting” spooks and agents of influence to foment protests or, even better, violent disorders; then send some “unidentified snipers” if the legitimate

government does not use enough violence to quell the protests, then denounce the leader you want replaced as “monster” “animal” or even “new Hitler” and threaten to overthrow him. After that, declare *urbi et orbi* that it is “highly likely” that the “new Hitler” will massacre his own people; add a false flag op if needed, and then declare a “coalition of the willing” composed of “friends” of the country you want to occupy who will take action due to the “ineffectiveness of the UN”; ditch any thoughts about international law and only speak of “**rules-based order**“. Check out how Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov explains the meaning of this substitution:

<https://youtu.be/T-u1hVCrTOY>

When you listen to the supporters of Guaido you will always hear them talking about how terrible Maduro is, how horrible the economic situation of Venezuela really is, how corrupt the members of the regime are, etc. etc. etc. This is all a smokescreen. Even the accusation that the last elections were stolen by Maduro is just another smokescreen. Why? Because even if Maduro did steal the election, Guaido did not have the right to declare himself President, Trump had no right to recognize him as such, and the Empire had no business threatening a military intervention or even a violation of the sovereign border of Venezuela under the ridiculous pretext of bringing in humanitarian aid while, at the same time, keeping the country under draconian (and fully illegal) sanctions. The solution to a crisis brought about by a violation of law cannot be a wholesale abandonment of the very core principles of law, but such a solution can only be a restoration of law and order by legal means. Kinda obvious, but so many seem to forget this, that it is worth repeating. And here, I will again post a graphic which really says it all:

The most powerful tools in the arsenal of the Empire are not its nuclear forces or its bloated, if generally ineffective, armed forces. The most powerful tool in the Empire’s arsenal is its ability to frame the discussion, to set what is focused upon and what is obfuscated. The Empire’s legacy corporate Ziomeia even dictates what words should or should not be used in a discussion (example: never speak of “illegal aggression” but speak of “humanitarian intervention”).

This is why we must speak of “**true sovereignty**“, of “**international law**“, of “**constitutional procedures**” and of “**aggression**” and “**threat of aggression**” as war crimes. We need to continue to demand that **basic fundamental principles of civilized societies** (such as the principle of “innocent until proven guilty”) be upheld by governments and by the media. We need to **deny the rulers of the Empire the**

right to declare that they have the right to completely ignore the most sacred principles of the post-WWII international order. We need to continue to **insist that a just international order can only be a multi-polar one;** that a single World Hegemon can never deliver justice and that there shall be no peace if there is no justice. Finally, we need to **ceaselessly demand that each country and each nation live according to its own traditions and beliefs** and reject the notion that a single political model must, or even can, be applied universally.

These are all principles which the Neocons hate and which they would love to bundle together under a single all encompassing concept, like George Orwell's "[*crimethink*](#)". Mostly, the Neocons like to use the "anti-Semite" and "anti-Semitic" to dismiss these principles, and when that fails, then "terrorist" is always available for use. Don't let them do that: every time they try that trick, immediately denounce it for what it is and continue focusing on what really matters. If we can force the Neocons to deal with these issues we win. It is really that simple.

It is impossible for me to guess how this conflict will play itself out. Will the brazen arrogance of "the Yankees" be enough to seriously red-pill the people of Venezuela and the rest of Latin America? Maybe. My hope and my gut feeling is that it might.

The Saker

Mr MAGA and the end of Western Civilization

March 15, 2019

Folks in the West are taught that their civilization has its roots in ancient Rome and/or ancient Greece. This is more a case of self-aggrandizement than serious historical research. While it is true that the city of Rome was sacked in 410AD, the Christian Roman civilization continued in the East for another 1000 years until 1453. The real roots of what we nowadays call the western civilization are to be traced back to the following time periods:

1. Most ancient (theoretical) roots: the early Frankish Merovingian Kingdom (481–751) and Carolingian empire (751–843).
2. Formative roots: the so-called “Holy Roman Empire” (800-1806) which was “Roman” only in name (this term appeared only in the XIIIth century; in French it is called more accurately “*Saint-Empire romain germanique*” but it really ought to be called the “Germanic Empire”, since it was neither “Roman” nor “Holy”).
3. Modern (ideological) roots: Renaissance, French Revolution, WWI, WWII, Cold War.

But in practical terms, we can say that the western civilization emerged from the Middle-Ages (5th-15th centuries) or, even better, from the times of the Crusades (1095-1410).



The true birth of the Western Civilization

Far from being the heir to the Roman Empire, the [AngloZionist Empire is a direct descendant from the Franks](#) and the civilization they built in the West on the ruins of the Christian Roman Empire. When Muslims nowadays speak of “Western

Crusaders” they are absolutely spot on. The only difference between the original Crusaders and their modern descendants is that the former at least pretended to be Christians. The latter wear their crass materialism as a badge of honor.

This civilization can be characterized by tremendous intellectual, technological and scientific achievement, arguably the most beautiful music ever composed (especially J.S. Bach) and many other artistic and architectural masterworks. Alas, it also has a darker side: imperialism, racism, genocide, slavery, religious and political persecutions and, of course, two world wars. So that record is checkered, to put it mildly, but it cannot be denied that in spite of its sins and flaws, western civilization also brought the world an immense intellectual legacy which inspired people worldwide. If you ask most western people what they associate with the western civilization they would probably name things like the scientific method, democracy, human rights, civil rights, the separation of powers, equality before the law, etc. People from other civilizations might view the western civilization in a very different way, but we can ignore that for our purposes. But what the so-called “collective West” (aka the AngloZionist Empire) is showing today is the exact opposite of what the West is supposed to stand for. Here are just a few examples:

1. **International law:** with the US/NATO aggression against the Serbian nation, a major feature of western civilization died: international law. What began then with bombs on Serbian civilians in the Serbian Krajina and Bosnia continues today with the absolutely disgraceful “alignment” of the key western power and the diktat of the Anglosphere, be it on the Skripal false flag, the many chemical false flags in Syria or, most recently, the AngloZionist coup against the legitimate government of Venezuela. The truth is that nobody gives a damn about international law in the AngloZionst Empire’s ruling class and that nowadays “might makes right”.
2. **Human rights:** the sad and outrageous truth is that the West is currently backing a (completely illegal) Nazi regime in the Ukraine, a Takfiri regime in the KSA and a Zionist (and openly racist regime) in occupied Palestine. All these regimes are mass violators of human rights and basic norms of civilized behavior. Needless to say, the US does violate a huge number of international norms and conventions in human rights, labor rights, due process, civil rights, etc. And we all know that the infamous Patriot Act was written even before the 9/11 false flag operation.

3. **Law of War and Geneva Conventions:** same here, the US is gleefully ignoring many of the most sacred provisions of the laws of war and the Geneva Conventions either by not ratifying parts of these instruments or by finding ways to circumvent them (think GITMO, Abu Ghraib, Bagram or even the many “black” CIA prisons located in various countries world-wide; think “extraordinary rendition” too, of course). Likewise, the USA totally and unconditionally support the Uber-violator of all imaginable legal obligations: Israel
4. **Due process,** especially evidentiary rules, have become a farce. Anybody doubting that should look up the following names: “Sami al-Arian”, “Sibel Edmonds”, “Victor Bout”, “Anwar al-Awlaki” or even “Julian Assange”. While nominally independent from the other branches of government, it appears that at least the main US courts are fully controlled by the Neocons and their Deep State.
5. **Respect for the political process:** it is absolutely clear that the Clinton Gang never accepted the election of Trump as POTUS and by rejecting this outcome, or by trying to label Trump as a “Russian agent”, the AngloZionist leaders will never accept their defeat. Hillary’s famous “basket of deplorables” comment is a perfect illustration of the immense contempt in which the AngloZionists hold the regular people of the USA.
6. **Open, competitive, markets.** It is pretty clear that the US has no use for open, competitive, markets and that the leaders of the Empire will use any and all methods to avoid an honest competition with the other countries, hence all the endless lists of sanctions, of threats against countries which might dare purchase non-US systems (the entire S-400 vs F-35 issue with Turkey is a perfect example). When we look at western countries, especially the USA, we see what some call “crony capitalism” with absolutely fantastic levels of corruptions, huge mega-corporations in control of entire segments of the economy, exports imposed by sanctions and threat of sanctions rather than competitive advantages, feudal labor laws, a ruthless imperialist/colonial policy of systematically robbing those who dare to live above resources the Empire needs or wants.
7. **Respect for alliances and partnerships.** The AngloZionist Empire has no allies – only vassal states, puppet regimes and comprador 5th columnists. The US has always treated its so-called “allies” with utter contempt, but until

Trump this contempt was hidden behind a thin veneer of diplomatic language. With Trump, even that is long gone.

The list goes on and on, really.

On January 18th of last year I wrote an article entitled "[The good news about the Trump Presidency: stupid can be good!](#)" in which I tried to show that by his illiterate actions, Donald Trump was maybe not making "America" (should be the "USA" but nevermind that megalomania) great, but he sure was weakening the AngloZionist Empire.



The last emperor is also naked...

But this is much bigger than just one narcissistic person, What we are witnessing today is the agony of a civilization which has outlived itself and now that the Empire is in its dying throes I want to mention another good thing Trump did: he became the emperor who himself shouts "*the king isn't wearing anything at all!!*" (in [the original story](#), a child does that, but in this case, we have a "fused" "child-emperor" who does that himself).

What are the "clothes" which I am referring to? Primarily what I would call the "Cold War cloak of imperial benevolence".

Remember the Cold War?

There was the "Evil Empire" whose Commie-Red agents were about to take over the planet and stick everybody in a labor camp versus the (collective) "West", which embodied the ideas of freedom, democracy, human rights, equality before the law, fairness, objectivity, economic prosperity, impartiality, tolerance, pluralism, etc. etc. etc.

Then, when Clinton became President and the Neocons finally openly and brazenly seized power, a good friend of mine spoke of a "grand coming out" which would be impossible to reverse. He was right. Not only are the Neocons now in total control of the Empire, but they have completely given up on any pretense of respectability. I am not only referring to Gitmo and torture, or the obscene and unconditional support for

the last openly racist country on the planet (aka “the only democracy in the Middle-East”) or, for that matter, a long string of completely illegal wars ranging from the wars against the Serbian nation in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. Neither am I referring to the growing list of treaties, agreements and even organizations which the USA has abrogated, denounced or withdrawn from. In fact, I am not even referring to the USA alone, but also to the so-called “friends and allies” of the Empire which can be described as “the collective West” or, maybe less charitable, the US colonies overseas.

When the Neocons finally came out and showed their true face, they did more than just affect the image of the USA abroad, they also gave a signal to their colonial administrators that all pretense of decency could now be dropped. Force, brute force, was now the order of the day. This is why Theresa May could spew out the most ridiculous and self-evidently stupid lies about the



Skripals (or about Syria, for that matter) or Macron could ban RT from the Élysée and nobody would peep. This is also why Poroshenko can safely declare that the Russian armed forces have invaded the Donbass or the EU can declare that the Russians are culprits in the recent Kerch bridge incident.

The Cold War forced the masters of the Empire to show a kind of “capitalism with a human face”. That Cold War is over now, and there is no need to pretend anymore.

Will the almighty USA join the USSR on the trash-heaps of history?

Many Russians living in the West (such as Dmitri Orlov) have noted the numerous similarities between the late Soviet Union (especially the so-called “stagnation years”) and the modern USA . I myself made such a list of similarities [as far back as 2014](#) when I listed the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1) A bloated military budget resulting in an ineffective military | 11) A systematic assimilation of dissent with espionage and terrorism |
| 2) A huge and ineffective intelligence community | 12) An all-prevailing paranoia about internal and external enemies |
| 3) A crumbling public infrastructure | 13) A financially catastrophic over-reach |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>4) A world record in the per-capita ratio of incarcerated people (US GULag)</p> <p>5) A propaganda machine which nobody trusts any more</p> <p>6) An internal dissident movement which the regime tries to keep silent</p> <p>7) A systematic use of violence against the citizens</p> <p>8) An increase in tensions between Federal and local authorities</p> <p>9) An industry whose main exports are weapons and energy</p> <p>10) A population fearful of being spied on by the internal security services</p> | <p>of the empire across the planet</p> <p>14) An awareness that the entire planet hates you</p> <p>15) A subservient press-corps of presstitutes who never dare to ask the real questions</p> <p>16) A sky-high rate of substance abuse</p> <p>17) A young generation which believes in nothing at all</p> <p>18) An educational system in free-fall, (the Soviet one was much better, btw)</p> <p>19) A disgust with politics by the general public</p> <p>20) A massive and prevailing amount of corruption on all levels of power</p> |
|---|--|

But even more crucial to the eventual fate of the USSR, I would argue, is the immense chasm between what the official ideology proclaims and what the ruling elites actually really do. Speaking about the Ukraine, I wrote in 2014 that ” ***what the AngloZionists are openly and publicly defending in the Ukraine, is the polar opposite of what they are supposed to stand for.*** That is an extremely dangerous thing to do for any regime and the AngloZionist Empire is no exception to that rule. Empire often crumbles when their own people become disillusioned and disgusted with the massive discrepancy between what the ruling elites say and what they do and as a result, it is not so much that the Empire is faced with formidable enemies as it is the fact that nobody is willing to stand up – nevermind die – in defense of it.”

The immense, mind-blowing, obscene hypocrisy of the Empire is not only revealed in its actions in the international arena or by the fact that the Empire does not shy away from



allying itself with Zionists, Nazis, Takfiris and any other morally repugnant gang of thugs (see in Kosovo, for example) as long as these thugs are willing to act as the cannon fodder of the Empire. The exact same mentality permeates every political action of the Neocons in internal politics too.

The Democratic Party especially, reached a new moral and ethical low when it invited [Michael Cohen to testify before Congress](#) even though the man is a convicted felon and liar and every word he would speak would be in total violation of the fundamental right of Donald Trump to keep his communications with his lawyer protected by the client-attorney relationship. What is absolutely amazing is that it is Congress which is violating the civil rights of a standing US President, and yet very few observers seem to be outraged by such actions.

This outrage was just the latest in a long series of actions by Congress which show that Congress considers Donald Trump as a traitor and a thug and we can rest assured that the Democrats won't stop until Trump is jailed. The fact that he is the person chosen by the people of the USA to be their president does not seem to matter at all to the lynch-mob in Congress.

Again, what is so striking here is not only how the US elites are turning against each other (which is a sure symptom of a deep crisis), but also the fact that the open persecution of Trump by Congress and the Ziomeia does not even try to come up with some semi-credible explanation or semblance of respectability. What we see is a lynch-mob which is determined to hang the man they have designated as the ultimate evil.

As for Mr MAGA himself, he is now busy calling Ann Coulter a “[wacky nut job](#)” to which she responded by [calling Trump an “idiot” and that having him as a President is a “national emergency” \(Rex Tillerson would agree with her on that!\)](#).

Nobody can predict how this struggle between the Neocons and the Clinton Gang on one hand and Trump on the other will



What began with the Crusaders will end with this...

play out, but my personal guess is that ***Trump is a disposable President***: the Neocons will use him to do all the crazy shit they typically are known for, and when the inevitable disaster strikes, they will blame him, him alone, while hiding their own role in what took place. This way Trump first gets to play ***shabbos-goy*** for the Neocons for a while, until they decide to destroy him like ***Haman*** or ***Amalek*** (the fates of Saddam Hussein or Muammar Gaddafi immediately come to mind). Mr MAGA himself clearly was never told that ***tob shebe goyyim harog***.

A dictatorship of minorities next?

We are often told that in a real democracy minorities should be protected against abuse from the majority and, to some degree, this is true. However, the primary function of any kind of real people-power is to protect the majority, the masses, from the abuse they typically suffer at the hand of various (and often federated) minorities. Whether the Founding Fathers intended this or not, the sad reality today is that the US political system is structured in a way to primarily benefit minorities, financial or otherwise. Hence the 1% meme popularized by Occupy Wall Street. The following are some of the characteristics of the most typical minorities found in the USA (and elsewhere):

1. They are typically ***far more aware of their minority identity/status*** than the majority. That is to say that if the majority is of skin color A and the minority of skin color B, this minority will be much more acutely aware of its skin color.
2. They are typically ***much more driven*** and active than the majority. This is probably due to their more acute perception of being a minority. Minorities themselves present their social success as a sign of intelligence, of course, even though in reality this is the direct result of a drive which representatives of the majority typically don't exhibit.
3. They are ***only concerned with single-issue politics***, that single-issue being, of course, their own minority status.
4. Since minorities are often unhappy with their minority-status, they are also often ***resentful of the majority***.
5. Since minorities are ***mostly preoccupied by their minority-status linked issues***, they rarely pay



Trump Derangement Syndrome

attention to the 'bigger picture' and that, in turn, means that *the political agenda of the minorities typically does not threaten the powers that be.*

6. Minorities often have a *deep-seated inferiority complex* towards the putatively more successful majority.
7. Minorities often *seek to identify other minorities* with which they can ally themselves against the majority.

The reason why the Neocons and their Deep State love to support all types of minorities is very plain and simple: minorities and their (hyper narrow) political agenda represent absolutely no threat whatsoever to the real, hidden, powers which run the Empire. Furthermore, minorities are extremely easy to manipulate. Thus these various minorities represent the ideal power base for a party like the Democratic Party which can then use its control over minority (identity) politics in its struggle against the Republican Party.

Furthermore, if you look at that list of characteristics above, you will immediately recognize the kind of nutcases suffering from [Trump Derangement Syndrome](#) which seems to chronically overcome Trump-haters.

What makes this situation particularly dangerous is that the Clinton propaganda machine (through the testimony of Mr Cohen) is now suggesting that Trump might not be willing to accept a defeat in the next elections. I submit that there is much bigger chance of seeing Trump win again and the Clinton gang trying to play a "Guaido" trick on Trump. The screaming creature in this photo does not strike me as willing to accept that anybody but her own preferred candidate would occupy the White House.

Don't get me wrong – screaming lesbians are funny, especially when they wear those pink "vagina hats", but there is also a much more ominous aspect to their antics. They are all based on a categorical rejection of the outcome of the electoral process and, which is even worse, a rejection of the "other", in this case the "deplorable" who dared to vote his/her conscience and not simply obey the instructions of the Ziomeida.

The truth is that the level of ideological intolerance among the opponents of Trump is much, much, higher than among Trump supporters. It is therefore only logical to assume that the potential for violence is much higher among the Trump-haters than it would be elsewhere. Right now all these folks are content with screaming, protesting

and drinking every drop of Cool-Aid the Idiot Box delivers to them on a daily basis. But once in power, this “coalition of minorities” will ruin the USA even faster than Trump did and whatever regime (as opposed to government or Administration) they put in power, will be a far cry from the worldwide Empire the USA attempted to build after WWII.

Conclusion: *Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat*

(Those whom God wishes to destroy he first deprives of reason)

What is taking place before our eyes is an amazing sight to behold: an Empire which is collapsing both internally and externally at an accelerating pace and the worse the Empire’s objective situation becomes, the more delusional and out of touch the Neocons and their Deep State appear to be.

Irrespective of all its flaws, mistakes and sins, it is sad to see how a civilization which gave the world the likes of Newton or Bach now rots away while being led by a gang of evil, arrogant, clowns. There have been plenty of villains in the history of Europe, but never such a gang of clueless and yet fantastically arrogant rulers. Just look at Trump, Macron or May – these are non-entities which pale in comparison to such leaders as Reagan, Mitterrand or even Margaret Thatcher (hardly a hero of mine, but the lady was smart, no doubt about that).

Now, with the likes of Pompeo in charge we can only pray that the losers running this dying Empire will not trigger a nuclear holocaust, whether by design or by sheer stupidity.



The Saker

The great fraud of National Zionism

March 21, 2019

The Defining Event for the USA

There is no doubt that the 9/11 false flag (now even admitted (by direct implication) by NIST!) was a watershed, a seminal event in our history. While millions (or even billions) watched in horror as the twin towers burned, a small group of Mossad agents stood nearby and danced in overwhelming joy. Why exactly were these Israelis dancing? Surely there was more than just *Schadenfreude* in this spontaneous expression of euphoria? Considering that these three dancing Israelis were just the tip of a much bigger iceberg, we can rest assured that there were many more folks dancing in joy that day, especially in Israel.

Why were these Mossad agents so blissful? The answer is obvious: 9/11 put the following notions front and center of the concerns of most people in the USA:

- We are under attack and in grave, imminent, danger
- Islam wants to destroy our way of life
- Those who did 9/11 also want to destroy Israel
- We need to ask the Israelis to share their “expertise” in dealing with Islamic terrorism
- Draconian laws and new police powers need to be passed to protect us from mass murder
- If you are not with us, then you are with the terrorists

Almost a decade before 9/11, in 1992, Francis Fukuyama had explained to us that history itself was coming to an end while Samuel P. Huntington explained to us in 1996 that we were witnessing a “clash of civilizations.” This kind of “scholarly” research created the perfect political background to an already rather disquieting perception of the upcoming Year 2000. In 2001, when all hell broke loose, the general public was already well prepared for it (just like the AngloZionist elites who had already prepared the huge “Patriot Act” long before the Twin Towers came down).

9/11 was as much the culmination of a significant preparatory effort as it was the trigger for a decade or more of wars.

Still, all this immense effort into shaping the West's perceptions was not good enough to hammer the sufficiently hysterical mindset into most people, in spite of the best efforts of the legacy Ziomeia to explain to us that Bin Laden decided that "we" were next in line for some kind of horrible (possibly nuclear) terrorist attack. Inside the USA the constant fear-mongering of the legacy Ziomeia did induce the suitable hysterical panic, while in the rest of the world things were not going quite as well. Especially not in Europe (which was vitally needed as a fig-leaf to pretend like the GWOT was not a US-Israeli thingie, but that there was a large "coalition of the willing" formed of the best and brightest countries out there). Something else, bigger and better, was needed and, sure enough, it was found: a mass exodus of poorly educated immigrants, the vast majority of them from Muslim countries.

While the (totally fictional and therefore totally unsuccessful) GWOT was petering out, the AngloZionists directed their stare at Libya and its leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. Gaddafi had warned that unless Europe was willing to pay Libya to contain the many millions of African refugees, a major catastrophe would happen. [He explained](#) that *"Tomorrow Europe might no longer be European, and even black, as there are millions who want to come in", "we don't know what will happen, what will be the reaction of the white and Christian Europeans faced with this influx of starving and ignorant Africans" and "we don't know if Europe will remain an advanced and united continent or if it will be destroyed, as happened with the barbarian invasions."*

The AngloZionists heard his message loud and clear and proceeded to immediately (and illegally!) overthrow and brutally murder Gaddafi (it is still unclear how many Israelis were dancing the day Col. Gaddafi was murdered). Almost exactly a decade after 9/11 the Zionists finally had their ["catastrophic and catalyzing event – like a new Pearl Harbor,"](#) but this time the victim was the entire European continent.

The defining event for Europe

The effect of what can only be called an "invasion" of immigrants was huge, to say the least. Even before this latest invasion began, Europe had already suffered many negative consequences from previous waves of emigres (Romanians, Gypsies, Albanians, Tunisians, Moroccans, Algerians, sub-Saharan Africans, Turks, Tamils, Kurds, Latin-Americans (during the US-sponsored terror years in Latin America), etc. and even before them there were the Spanish, Portuguese and Italians (who, at least, all superbly adapted to their new place of residence). But that new wave was

much bigger and much more dangerous than any previous one. A huge, massive, immigration crisis resulted in most European countries.

Can you guess what the Europeans felt? They felt that:

- We are under attack and in grave, imminent, danger
- Islam wants to destroy our way of life
- Those who did Charlie Hebdo and all the other terrorist attacks in Europe also want to destroy Israel
- We need to ask the Israelis to share their “expertise” in dealing with Islamic terrorism
- Draconian laws and new police powers need to be passed to protect us from mass murder
- If you are not with us, then you are with the terrorists

Sounds familiar?

If it does, it is because it is.

In terms of methods and means, 9/11 and the invasion of Europe by hordes of immigrants could not be more different. But in terms of results, they achieved very similar outcomes.

Russians and Muslims, which do you fear most?

The election of Trump was something so totally unexpected by the AngloZionists (and for Trump himself too!) that it caught everybody completely off-guard. In their typically infinite arrogance, the Neocons were darn sure that Hillary would win and they would be left in total control of the USA, but the American people decided to show them a big, collective, middle finger and vote for the “unthinkable” and “impossible” candidate. And since the Neocons could hardly blame Trump’s victory on Bin Laden or al-Qaeda, they quickly came up with the “Russian interference” canard which had the added beneficial side-effect that it could justify spending even more money on war against a very real and powerful Russia than on war against a rather nebulous “al-Qaeda”. The fact that Russia has no reason to attack anybody, least of all the USA made no difference here. All that was needed to “prove” (under the “highly likely” “Skripal standard of evidence”) that the Russians are a terrible threat was to come up with the absolutely ridiculous Skripal false flags combined with a few imaginary chemical attacks by “animal Assad.” And, of course, when the USA suffered

it's latest military debacle in Syria, the Neocons could also blame it all on Russia. As they say, "one hand washes the other." Initially, the Russian boogeyman looked even sexier than the Islamist one, but then with Putin and Russia steadfastly refusing to take any of the many baits tossed at them, the "Islamic" threat became sexier again. After all, Russians are (mostly) White and (mostly) Christian, so they are not that scary. But Muslims?! Ask a typical westerner what he knows about Islam and you will be treated to a long list of evils, some based in reality, others entirely imaginary. Besides, the Muslim world is so big and so diverse, that it is effortless to find horrible things about it, even real ones! The lie here is primarily one of omission. Specifically, two things are never said:

1. That Takfirism is a minority strain of Islam and long before killing all the "infidels" and "Christians" the Takfiris first want to kill any and all Muslims (the vast majority) who dare to disagree with their interpretation of Islam.
2. That all the Takfiri terrorist groups are federated, organized, financed, trained and even protected by the AngloZionist Empire (as seen many recent times in Syria when the US protected, transported, treated, resupplied, and even coordinated the various al-Qaeda franchises in Syria). That was also true for Chechnia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo.

This last point is so important that I will repeat it again: to the degree that there is an "Islamic threat" to the West, it is a "threat" fully and totally created and controlled by the leaders of the AngloZionist Empire. You want proof? There are many, but my favorite one is the passports which are found next to the smoldering ruins of the Twin Towers or the passport left in the car right before the Charlie Hebdo attack. How nice it is of the "Islamic terrorists" to make darn sure that they are quickly and "convincingly" identified! There is also the "minor" fact that all those "Islamic terrorists" apparently have ties with western security services (heck, some even traveled to Israel!). As for the lifestyle of these "Islamic terrorists", in each case they are anything but Islamic (which the legacy Ziomeia and various Zionist "experts" always explain as part of a "deceptive tactic" not to be noticed in spite of the fact that every one of those so-called "Islamic



terrorists” was, of course, not only “noticed” but even actively “developed” by western security services!).

The real nature of the threat faced by mankind is rather well illustrated by this image which I found somewhere on the Internet. Not convinced? Try this thought experiment. For a few minutes, simply assume that Wahhabism=Imperialism=Zionism and then see if the world we live in makes sense to you. Next, assume that Wahhabism is *sui generis*, that imperialism is something the pesky Russians are guilty of, and that Zionism is absolutely wonderful. Now see if the world we live in makes sense to you.

Unless you are severely challenged, the correct model is rather obvious, I think.

Of course, like all slogans or conceptual shortcuts, Wahhabism = Imperialism = Zionism grossly simplifies a much more complex reality and takes a few intellectual “shortcuts”. But at its core, it is a crude but fundamentally correct interpretation of the world we live in. The only thing I would add to that list would be an “=terrorism” at the end.

So what about Russia in all this?

Russia is self-evidently the only country on the planet which can turn all of the USA into radioactive ashes in just a few hours. But there is much more to Putin’s Russia than just military power. For one thing, what Russia can do to the USA, the USA can do to Russia. So there is an ugly, but so far stable, balance of terror between the two countries. In economic terms, Russia’s economy ([soon to be roughly about the size of Germany’s](#)) is dwarfed by the vast Chinese economy and Russia is not, therefore, a credible economic competitor. Politically, things are a bit more complicated: Russia is popular with many nations worldwide, but a majority of governments will bow to the World Hegemon every time Uncle Shmuel slams his fist on the table, right? Well, not really. The case of the US aggression against Venezuela is compelling as the US failed to get any legitimate regional or global organizations to back the attempt at overthrowing the Venezuelan government. True, this is primarily due to the genuinely fantastic incompetence of the Neocons who in their crazed zeal found nobody better to pick than Elliott Abrams to lead the attack against Venezuela (does that stupid choice also remind you of the time when the Neocons suggested Henry Kissinger as the head of the 9/11 Commission? The Neocons really don’t realize how offensive and even ridiculous they appear in the eyes of the rest of mankind...).

Still, it is rather clear that under the Presidency of Donald Trump the US influence and power in the world have declined truly dramatically – so much for making anything at all “great again”. Well, except Trump’s ego, of course, which was already huge even before the election). Now let’s add it all up.

In military terms, while Russia has a much superior conventional capability, in terms of nuclear forces the USA and Russia keep each other in check by both having the capability of vaporizing the other side even after riding out a first strike (hence the redundancy of nuclear weapons systems). Here we have a draw.

In economic terms, the US economy dwarfs Russia’s. Advantage USA.

In political terms, Trump ain’t too popular (or credible), but neither is Putin (although he, at least, is taken seriously). Another draw, but with another advantage for the USA.

So what’s the big deal with Russia? Surely, nobody in the White House seriously believes that the Russians hacked the DNC, that they stole the elections, that they poisoned Skripal or that they plan to invade the Baltics and Poland. That kind of nonsense is just the vulgar “political [prolefeed](#)” for those who still pay attention to the legacy Ziomeida.

No, the real threat posed by Russia is a *civilizational* one.

Putin’s Russia as a civilizational threat

I need to clarify why I speak of “Putin’s Russia.” The reason for that choice of words is that modern Russia is not the Russia of the 1990s or even the Soviet Union. And neither is modern Russia the same Russia as before 1917. Next, I want to stress that Putin’s Russia is a project, a moving target, a partially realized potential – but not yet a stable, finished “product” (in the past I wrote about these issues, [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). Still, we can see a number of very interesting phenomena taking place in Russia.

First, the overwhelming majority of the Russian people reject the Western-style “democracy” and its so-called “values.” After almost two decades of gross violation of every single norm, the West pretended for centuries to stand for the credibility and reputation of itself as a source of moral or political inspiration, and now it has become roadkill. Mind you – the Russians very much want real people power, real

“democracy” if you will, just not of the western model. They want their own, uniquely Russian democracy.

Second, Russia is openly and systematically denouncing the absolute hypocrisy of the AngloZionist Empire. The historical speeches of Putin in Munich or at the UN come to mind.

Third, Russia is at least partially a Muslim country too! She does not have a Muslim majority, and Islamic customs and traditions are mostly kept only by a minority of Muslims (just like Christian traditions are held by a majority of nominally “Orthodox” Christians). The point here is this: for Russians, Muslims are not some type of “scary aliens” who will invade your village and destroy your way of life. Historically, Russia has had terrible relations (including 12 wars) with Turkey, and rather bumpy relations with other Muslim countries (I think of Iran here). But Russians have also lived in peace with their Muslim neighbors for centuries, and they are acutely aware of that. Which means that Russians have a much broader spectrum of experiences with Muslims and Islam, some good, some bad and some absolutely horrible. But what Russians know and which makes them so dramatically different from most people in the West is that peaceful cohabitation with traditional Islam is very much possible. It all depends on the specific type of Muslim you are dealing with.

Finally, while Christianity is still struggling in Russia, there is no doubt that most Russians prefer the traditional values found in Christianity to the kind of “everything goes” or, even more so, the “everything has its price” which forms the “spiritual” core of the West’s post-Christian materialistic society. This is why most Russians are clearly “gender-differentiated” – men look and act like men, women look and act like women, and the various [LGBTQQAAP](#) (add more letters if you are so inclined, that will be more “inclusive”) are told to hold their “pride parades” elsewhere.

These are some (there are many more!) reasons why Russia should not be considered part of Europe, at least not in a civilizational sense of the word. Of course, Russia is partially European geographically, and most Russians look “White” (albeit that whiteness hides a huge genetic diversity). Some particularly ignorant observers believe that Russia is European because Russia is Christian. This completely overlooks the “minor” detail that Latin (and later Reformed) Christianity had lost all connections with the rest of the Christian world during much of the Middle-Ages while the Christian Roman civilization continued to exist far away from barbaric Europe, first in Byzantium and later in Russia and other Orthodox countries.

Besides, the modern West is not Christian at all, not Latin and not Reformed, it is post-Christian and, I would argue, anti-Christian. Thus, even if Russia was a paragon of traditional, Patristic, Christianity – this would in no way affect the dynamics in the West, neither with the various Christian denominations (which, by Patristic standards cannot even be called “Christian” any more) nor with the overwhelming majority of atheist/agnostic materialists who have lost even a vague sense of right/wrong or even true/false.

There are, of course, millions of Russians who lost their original Russian cultural and spiritual roots. A person like that is called a “вырусь” (vy-rooss) in Russian. Thankfully, many (most?) of them have emigrated (to the West, of course) and they are therefore not very influential nowadays. But we often see their hostile comments under pro-Russian or pro-Putin articles. Many of these folks made good careers in the 1990s and are angry at Putin for terminating that bonanza. Others hate Putin because they were found useless and ditched as soon as the Eltsin gang lost power.

True, the Russian **elites** (as opposed to the common people) have been profoundly westernized for the last 300+ years. With Putin in power this has dramatically changed. There is still a powerful 5th column in Russia, but the keys to real power are held by Putin and his Eurasian Sovereignist supporters in the armed forces, the security services and, most importantly, in the general public. And so far, they are holding firm, and while there are regular ups and downs, all in all, Russia is doing amazingly well and is headed in the right direction. I would even argue that theirs is the only viable direction!

So why do the western elites hate (and fear) Russia so badly? Let’s look into what kind of values the West truly stands for today.

21st century western values are not your grandfather values for sure!

Here we need to come back to 9/11 and the invasion of Europe by an immense flow of refugees. These are just two instances in which the people in the West felt directly attacked and whether 9/11 was a false flag or not, or whether the Empire triggered the refugee crisis by militarily attacking the Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (that was the official name of Libya) is irrelevant.

What matters is that the people in the West felt attacked by a vicious and most dangerous enemy: Islam.

There were other, no less significant “attacks” on the very core of Western identity. For example, I don’t believe that the term “cultural Marxism” makes any sense *at all*, but it does describe a real phenomenon. Ditto for the profusion of pushy and even aggressive “minorities” of all kinds who demanded not only equal rights but even special privileges. In the legacy Ziomeida, we saw an apparently never-ending hunting season against Whites, against men, against heterosexuals, against Anglos, and against Christians. Needless to say, the attack on White Anglo-Saxon Christian heterosexual males was (and still is) relentless. A majority of people in the West were told that they are guilty of this or that historical injustice or crime, that their traditions and beliefs were evil and that they out to be ashamed of their identity on all levels. Of course, there have been many horrible and outright disgusting chapters in the history of the western civilization, but unless you believe in collective and/or inherited guilt, that hardly justifies the kind of hatred and contempt which the (pseudo-) “liberal” elites constantly express against anything traditional.

If the election of Trump was a huge slap in the face of the Neocons, the reaction of the Neocons to this event was a massive slap in the face of the American people. What began with Hillary’s “basket of deplorables” soon turned into a long list of ridiculous accusations (including, my personal favorites: Ron Paul is a “[Putin’s best friend](#),” Rand Paul a “[Russian stooge](#)” and Tulsi Gabbard a “[Putin puppet](#)”).

Frankly, this kind of constant bashing of everything traditional is nothing else but a type of mental rape of the western cultural identity. A reaction to this kind of onslaught was inevitable. The only question was which form it would take.

Understanding National Zionism – a primer

It took the form of what the French philosopher [Alain Soral](#) called “[National Zionism](#).” Here is how [Soral explains this ideology](#):

There is a huge surge of what is called national-Zionism, that is, to bring nationalists to Zionism. For me, this is a fundamental contradiction in this amalgam of Muslims equal to Daesh, basically in France in Muslim equal to scum equal to Daesh equal to Palestinians and therefore the good Frenchman if he wants to get out of the shit in which these people have put him, must support Israel and not take offense and accept the disproportionate power that the Jewish community embodied by the CRIF has over France and that is the supreme scam. This is politically unacceptable, morally unacceptable, strategically stupid. This is what I call

national-Zionism and this is the fundamental struggle today. We must refuse this scam, refuse the nationalism in Kippa. And that's not for that, all of a sudden, we would become pro-Muslim to come back to your question.

We must treat the issue of the world seriously, that is to say that immigration is very, very problematic today and the Muslim issue is a follow-up to the immigration issue. (...) They do absolutely nothing against immigration. This is a certainty, so if we want to be against the Islamization of France, we must take the problem at the right end, that is, resolve the migration issue. To resolve the migration issue, we must regain political power over those who have the power and who have brought us to this point today and who have fought with all their strength, with all their strength, against our borders, against identity.

I would remind you that the last cover of Elisabeth Lévy's magazine, Causeur, the title, is "anti-French ideology" which would also be favourable to Islam or Muslims. I would remind you that this is the opposite of the title of Bernard Henri Lévy's book. So we have a Lévy that responds to a Lévy whose book was "The French ideology" which was at the time to say that French was intrinsically fascist and anti-Semitic.

So in 20 years, we have gone from the problem being Catholic French, French and today, no, finally the problem is Muslim immigrants. But those who declared war on the native French in the 70s and 80s are the same today who tell us, let us be friends to fire those who were put in your face and educated against you. Because that's what national-Zionism is all about, making friends with the people who are the cause of all our problems and who for 2500 years have been systematic and fierce anti-nationalists except for their own nation called Israel. So that's clear.

Another French author, Youssef Hindi, [explained the role of the USA](#) in this new ideological paradigm:

We see the return of the idea of "nation." The EU is in a state of crisis. A part of the American Establishment, particularly Donald Trump, is trying to implement the implosion of the European Union. We are witnessing a resurgence of nationalism: like in the USA, Russia, GB and also in Italy. It is falling apart on all sides. Thus, the strategy is as follows: to always stay a step ahead, assert control over this new European patriotism and nationalism. Therefore, from the Right Jews elites' perspective, it is absolutely essential to

retain control over this European patriotism and nationalism by amalgamating it with the state of Israel.

I never believed that the leaders of the AngloZionist Empire were very intelligent, that is a Hollywood myth, but they indeed are clever, and when they realized that a nationalistic blowback was inevitable, they decided to simply take control of it. This is the brilliant simplicity of the logic of National Zionism. It goes something like this:

I, we, my family and my country are all under attack by rabid religious fanatics who will never cease until they kill all those who don't agree with them and destroy our way of life. In this struggle for our very survival, we need to turn to those who fought that enemy for decades and who have developed the most sophisticated anti-terrorist methods and means: the Israelis. Furthermore, Israel is like a small island of European democracy in an ocean of violent and chaotic brutality. Heck, Israel is part of Europe, really, it even participates in the Eurovision! Unlike us, the Israelis are proud, and they don't hesitate to defend their culture, religion, and values, why don't we do the same? They even have the right to bear arms! Jews are White, like us, and we share a common Judeo-Christian heritage which places a duty upon us all to support Israel, especially against the Iranian Mollahs who have publicly sworn to kill all Jews and wipe Israel off the map. Last but not least, Islam is a threat to our civilization and Muslim immigrants must be either re-educated to fit into our society or sent back home. Those who disagree with any of the above are either anti-Semites, Putin agents, Holocaust deniers, conspiracy theorists, terrorist sympathizers or terrorists themselves.

Let's take a few well-known US public figures associated with conservatism or the Alt-Right: Alex Jones, Paul Joseph Watson, Jordan Peterson, Steve Bannon or even Donald Trump himself. Have you ever heard these "defenders" of western tradition or "Christian values" have anything critical to say about Israel, Israeli policies or Zionism? The exact same phenomenon can be observed in France where putatively "conservative," and "patriotic" folks such as Eric Zemmour or Marine LePen are using the frustration of the French people with the regime in power to channel that frustration into a hatred of Islam and everything Muslim. These folks are also the promoters of what has become known as "Christian Zionism" which worships everything Jewish and/or Israeli and which believes that Christians and Jews have "almost" the same religion. Let's take Steve Bannon as an example.

Here is an article entitled "[Steve Bannon drafting curriculum for right-wing Catholic institute in Italy](#)" which sure makes Bannon look like some kind of very conservative and traditionalist Christian. The same article also mentions Cardinal Raymond Burke, as "a leading Vatican conservative". [According to Cardinal Burke](#), this institute's missions is "to

promote a number of projects that should make a decisive contribution to the defense of what used to be called Christendom". This "right-wing Catholic institute" is run by a Christian Zionist, [Benjamin Harnwell](#) who [declared that](#) the younger generation across the Western world was on a "long slide" into darkness. His Institute is working to resist by "*trying to prop up one of the major pillars of Western civilization – what used to be called 'Christendom' – and that's the recognition that man is made in the image and likeness of God.*" So far, this also looks very nice. The problem is that Bannon, Burke, and Harnwell have all sold out to Israeli interests and the ideology which they are promoting is not traditional Christianity at all, but this nonsensical and amorphous idea of "Judeo-Christianity." This is why the Latin website "[Media Catholiques Infos](#)" correctly concludes by saying "*Such a high place of Christianity deserves better than to serve as a springboard for National Zionism under the guise of an "academy for the defense of the Judaeo-Christian West."*

The sad truth is that these pretend-traditionalists have all been co-opted by the Israel lobby and that they are being used to brainwash the folks in the West to see Islam as a foe when, in reality, the real foe of the West is Zionism as Zionism is the force which is responsible for both 9/11 and the massive flow of immigrants into Europe. As for the Papacy, it has been in bed with Talmudic and Kabbalistic rabbis for many centuries (just read Michael Hoffman's superb book, the 700 pages long "[The Occult Renaissance Church of Rome](#)") and not just since Vatican II (as some Latins naively believe!). It is therefore not surprising that [Bannon says](#) about "Catholic" universities that they are "*the foundational institutions of the Judeo-Christian West.*"



This is the face of the new "conservative West"...

France does not have the equivalent of a Steve Bannon. But it does have a functional equivalent in the person of Renaud Camus whose very politically-correct biography you can read [on Wikipedia](#). Even a cursory read-through that entry will immediately reveal the profoundly Zionist worldview of Camus which can be further established, if needed, by reading about Camus' "[Great Replacement](#)" theory; you might also want to compare this to the "[Eurabia](#)" theory of the Israeli author Bat Ye'or (aka [Gisele Littman](#)).

All this paranoid and racist nonsense can be summed up in a short sentence: led by Zionists the White Christian West will rise again!

If it weren't so ugly and tragic, it would actually be funny (especially to see the Latins and the Talmudists in bed with each other after centuries of mutual hatred). But in reality, there is nothing funny about the colonization of the western minds by the Zionist parasite. It might even end up with a nuclear war.

The US Alt-Right and the French National Front as the useful idiots of AIPAC and CRIF

I am personally convinced that the entire Alt-Right movement has been created by the US deep state and that it is still run by it. The purpose of the Alt-Right and the National Front is to offer a nationalistic and pseudo-Christian alternative to any kind of real traditionalism or any kind of real Christianity. On the rank and file level you will find a lot of anti-Israeli, anti-Zionist and even anti-Jewish sentiments amongst Alt-Righters and National Fronters, but on the leadership level, it is wall to wall Zionist. To get a feel for this Zionist (pseudo-)patriotism just take a look at these propaganda images:



Marine le Pen tells the Israeli media that the National Front is like a "shield" protecting French Jews



A sample of Zio-patriotic propaganda

By taking control of the key nationalist movements in the West the Zionists have given themselves a “dream opposition”: that is an opposition which they fully control; which they can poke a little from time to time when there is the need for some kind of anti-Semitic incident; but which they can also mobilize against anybody daring to oppose Israel or Zionism.

In this context Russia becomes the ultimate threat for very good reasons:

First, Russia is completely rejecting the unipolar world model and, together with China, Russia wants a multi-polar world in which relations between states are ruled by international law.

Second, Russia cannot be militarily threatened and neither can China, by the way. [The RAND Corporation finally admitted that much.](#)

Third, thanks to the various sanctions against Russia, Russia is gradually withdrawing from the AngloZionist controlled markets. You could say that the main effect of all the sanctions has been to make Russia stronger, more independent and closer to the goal of full sovereignty.

Fourth, Russia is not only openly rejecting the AngloZionist civilizational model, but she also denounces its absolute hypocrisy. In particular, the Russian people are

rejecting the West's materialism, in particular in its [turbo-capitalist variant](#). While not officially endorsing socialism as such, Russia does declare herself a “social state.”

Fifth, Russia is taking the polar opposite approach to Islam, to what we see in the West. Unlike the Empire, Russia is serious about killing as many Takfiris as possible no matter where they are. But, unlike the Empire again, Russia sees traditional Islam as a **vital ally** against the Takfiri rot and Russians don't think of Muslims as “aliens” at all.

Last but not least, Putin's Russia has made patriotism (i.e., love for one's country) a central element of the social and political culture while categorically rejecting any form of nationalism or, even more so, racism. “White Pride” is about as popular in Russia as “Gay Pride” would be.



You could say that the gradually emerging new Russian ideology is the polar opposite of National Zionism. No wonder the Neocons hate Russia so much!

Conclusion: National Zionism is a gigantic fraud

There is no other way of putting this: National Zionism is a gigantic fraud. It is also the rising political ideology of the West, and that presents a major risk for our entire planet. I often hear naive folks saying “*what is your problem with Zionism?! all it wants is a safe homeland for Jews too! What is wrong with that?!“*

I addressed this issue in some detail [here](#), so I will simply say here that Zionism, whether of the national or the anti-national type, separates mankind into two qualitatively different categories: Jews and non-Jews (ironically, it shares this fundamental belief with National-Socialism. It's just that the hierarchical scale is reversed, that's all). Next, it assumes that all non-Jews are at the very least **potential** “anti-Semites” and thus Jews need to do two things to remain safe. First, create a Jewish homeland and, second, secure enough Jewish power in literally all the countries on the planet to be ready should the *goyim* (literally “nations” but in the Talmudic context it carries exactly the same meaning as the German [Untermensch](#):

subhuman) come down with unpredictable (by definition) and unexplainable (by definition) cases of “anti-Semitism”. In contrast, Jewish lives and, especially, Jewish blood acquire a profound soteriological meaning: Jewish life is infinitely precious because 1) Jews will “repair” the world (*tikkun olam*) and 2) because the *Moshiach* will be born from a Jew and become [a world leader accepted by all nations](#). A (somewhat secularized) variation of this philosophy is that all Jews form a “collective Moshiach” and that all the “nations” will accept their power and rule with gratitude as this will usher the final and everlasting era of milk and honey. Finally, Talmudic/Pharisaic “Judaism” teaches that Jews “represent” mankind before God and God before mankind (yeah, modesty is not their forte). Next time you hear some Israeli politician going bonkers about spilled “Jewish blood” just remember this info, and it will all make sense. Ditto for when some other (or even the same) Israeli politician demands some gruesome revenge, terrible retribution or promises to kill some huge number of enemies. This kind of “Purim talk” only makes sense once you realize [how deep and fundamental Talmudic/Zionist racism really is](#).

So what constitutes “enough power”? Simple: once the people of a country lose control of their government and the sovereignty of their country is gone, then the Zionists will feel they are safe. This theory is 1) racist 2) paranoid 3) sociopathic and, frankly, just plain silly. But this is what the Talmudic worldview produces in a secularized society. A critical assumption of this worldview is that any form of nationalism or even patriotism is dangerous (by definition) unless it is Jewish or Israeli, at which point it is laudable and benevolent (again, by definition). Thus, besides being many other things, Zionism is also a theory of power based on a zero-sum game. Of course “zero-sum” might sound benign until you remember that it implies a total struggle to the end, a total, absolute defeat of the other, a destruction of all your enemies. Not something helpful in a multi-polar world with lots of nuclear weapons.

National Zionism is a fraud and an extremely toxic and dangerous one. Any supposed patriot or nationalist who fails to recognize that, is at best poorly informed and, at worst, a useful idiot for the leaders of the AngloZionist Empire.

The Yellow Vests in France got it. Occupy Wall Street, or the Tea Party did not. I suspect that many Trump voters also got it, but they were betrayed by Mr. MAGA. Will Rand and/or Ron Paul recognize this danger? What about Tulsi Gabbard? Frankly, I don’t know. But if they don’t, other Americans eventually and inevitably will.

We might even see a US version of Yellow Vests one day, who knows?

The Saker

PS: for the latest National-Zionist induced stupidity, see here:
<https://www.rt.com/news/454428-us-israel-golan-recognize/>

PPS: looks like we will be treated to one of those each day, this is the latest one:
<https://www.rt.com/news/454483-trump-savior-jews-pompeo/>

A few initial thoughts about the first round of the Ukrainian Presidential election (UPDATED)

April 03, 2019

The first round of the Presidential election in the Ukraine took place on April Fool's Day and it could be tempting to dismiss it all like a big farce which, of course, it was, but, we should not overlook the fact that some very interesting and important events have just taken place. I won't discuss them all right now, there will be plenty of time for that in the future. For now I will only focus on those elements of a much bigger picture which seem most critical to me. These elements are:

The Nazis suffered a *crushing* defeat in this election.

By "Nazis" I primarily mean their main figurehead – Petro Poroshenko (the rest of the "minor Nazis" did so poorly that they don't matter anymore). Think of it: in spite of his immense wealth (he outspent everybody else and even spent more than twice what the next big spender – Tymoshenko – doled out for each vote), in spite of his immense "administrative resource" (that is the Russian expression for the ability to use the power of the state for your personal benefit), in spite of his "victory" with the [*Tomos*](#), in spite of triggering the Kerch bridge incident, in spite of breaking all the remaining treaties with Russia, in spite of his control of the media and in spite of the (now admittedly lukewarm) support of the West, Poroshenko suffered a crushing defeat. See for yourself:

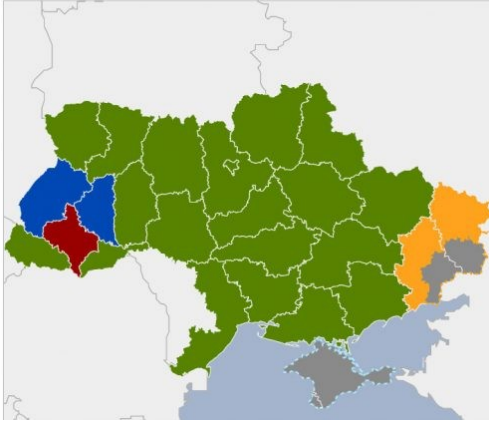
Presidential election results

Leading candidate in each region. Latest as of 21:55, 1 April, Kiev time (BST +2). 95.14% of votes counted

■ Volodymyr Zelenskyy ■ Yuriy Boyko
■ Petro Poroshenko ■ Yulia Tymoshenko

Select a region from the dropdown or tap or click on the map below

WHOLE UKRAINE ▾



WHOLE UKRAINE

Turnout: 63.53%

Votes for each candidate (%)



source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-47767440>

Look at the only two regions Petro Poroshenko (i.e. the Nazis) actually won (in blue) and see how nicely they overlap with the rough historical contours of the [Galicia](#) region. But Poroshenko managed to even lose part of that to Iulia Tymoshenko! Bottom line: except for a minority of rabid hardcore Nazis in Galicia, the rest of the Ukraine hates the Poroshenko Ukronazi regime. We always knew that, but now we have the proof.



Now I don't want to present that just as some kind of massive anti-Nazi vote because, in truth, this is first and foremost a massive no-confidence vote against the entire ruling elite of the Banderastan which emerged in 2014 as a result of the Euromaidan coup d'état. Remember how Poroshenko promised peace in weeks, a full respect for the Russian language and prosperity for all? Well, all he delivered was

chaos, insecurity, poverty, violence, a massive influx of Ukronazis from Canada and the USA and, above all, a completely hysterical, rabid, russophobia combined with abject groveling before the AngloZionist Empire. He also brought an absolutely unbelievable level of corruption, having personally doubled his net worth many times over. The legacy Ziomeidia and the Ukropropaganda can say all they want, and they can try to ban the Russian media and Internet in the Ukraine. But the truth is that **everybody in the Ukraine knows that the Ukraine went from being the richest Soviet Republic to the poorest country in Europe.** In fact, there are quite a few African countries which are doing much better than the Ukraine. The truth is, and has been for several years now, that the Ukraine is a failed state and that there is absolutely no even vaguely plausible scenario in the foreseeable future in which the Ukraine could begin to recover.

Hence this amazing result: short of the Galician Nazis, everyone else absolutely hates the regime in power. So Poroshenko's score is a humiliating defeat for all the Ukronazis. But not for Petro Poroshenko himself!

Petro Poroshenko scores a remarkable personal victory

Poroshenko's absolutely vital goal was to make it into the 2nd round. Had he failed to make it he would have had to immediately jump into an aircraft and leave the country (because the most likely victor of the Presidential election would have been Iulia Tymoshenko and we can be darn sure that she would immediately jail him and most of his cronies). In order to make it into the 2nd round, Poroshenko did not have to defeat Zelenskii, but only defeat Tymoshenko and that Poroshenko also succeeded in doing. Oh sure – it was thanks to a huge, massive fraud all over the country (especially in the easternmost and westernmost regions) and he beat her only by 2.5% but that is more than enough.

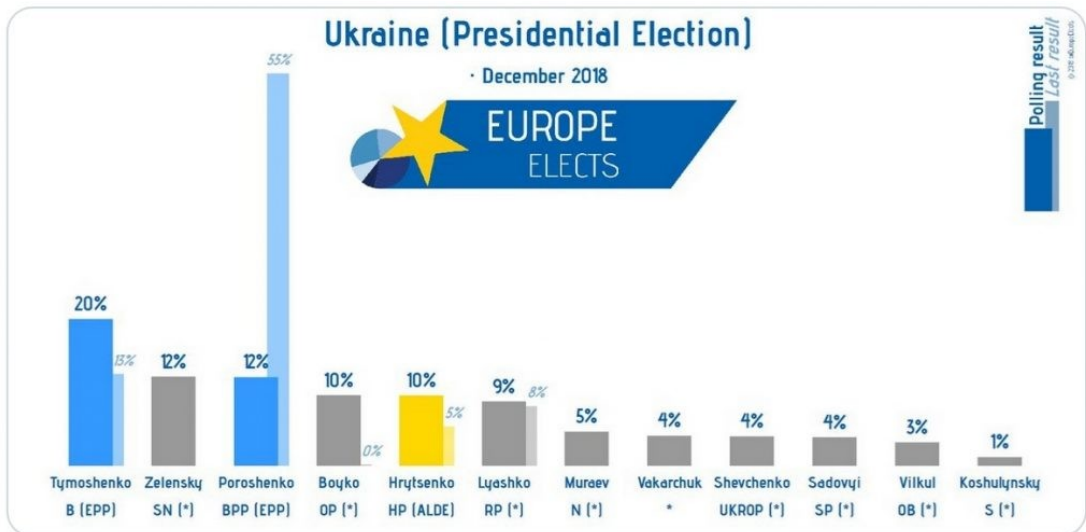
Besides, it is practically impossible to falsify an election and compensate for, say, a 15%-20% difference. But to cheat and change a result by less than 5% is much more doable. In fact, if we assume that a 5% fraud is well within the means of an outgoing President and billionaire, then we can also see that **we will never know who really won.** See here for an almost finished (99.68%) count for the top four contenders:

| Результати голосування » По Україні | | Чергові вибори Президента України 31 березня 2019 року | |
|---|--------|--|--|
| % опрацьованих протоколів по Україні | | 99.68 | |
| Кількість виборців, які взяли участь у голосуванні по Україні | | 18 829 740 | |
| % виборчих бюлетенів, визнаних недійсними по Україні | | 1.18 | |
| Кандидат | Графік | % голосів виборців, поданих за кандидата | Кількість голосів виборців, поданих за кандидата |
| Зеленський Володимир | | 30.22 | 5 691 655 |
| Порошенко Петро | | 15.95 | 3 003 792 |
| Тимошенко Юлія | | 13.39 | 2 522 951 |
| Боїко Юрій | | 11.67 | 2 198 976 |

While Zelenskii is untouchable and way ahead of everybody else, **Poroshenko, Tymoshenko and Boiko are all within less than 5% of each other.**

Interesting, no?

Keep in mind that Boiko is the closest thing to a pro-Russian candidate and that just a few years ago he was virtually unknown. See for yourself:



2014 results vs 2018 poll

Look at the stats for 2014: Poroshenko had 55% of the vote, Tymoshenko 8% and Boiko just about 0%. Please also notice that in the 2018 poll Tymoshenko is way ahead of Poroshenko while Boiko is not far behind. As for Zelenskii, he scores just like Poroshenko.

[Sidebar: this is not today's topic, but Boyko's score is rather amazing considering that he was presented by the entire Ukronazi propaganda machine as "Putin's agent" and that he even had the audacity to travel to Moscow to meet with Gazprom CEO Miller and Prime Minister Medvedev. Boiko not only won as many regions as Poroshenko – 2 – but the eastern Ukraine clearly voted for him, which tells us all we need to know about



Miller, Medvedev and Boiko

where the true sympathies of the people of the Donbass really are. In fact, we can be pretty sure that this outcome has been carefully noted in Donetsk and Lugansk and that this only makes the position of the Novorussians vis-à-vis Kiev even stronger. Finally, it should also be noted here that the outcome of this first round of elections further confirms that the current Banderastan is falling apart and that this is an artificial country with artificial borders and no heritage (cultural, linguistic, religious or political) common to all the people currently living under the Nazi occupation.]

What we see here is a double effort by Poroshenko: on one hand he used his immense personal wealth and his equally immense “administrative resource” to buy as many votes as possible, while on the other hand he got the missing votes simply by falsifying the election. In fact, I think that pretty much all the main candidates agree that the election was stolen, except for the two who benefited from this.

[Sidebar: we will never know for sure how much of the votes were stolen but Rostislav Ishchenko, probably currently the best expert on the Ukraine, estimates that no less than 20% of the votes were stolen, and of these no less than 10% were stolen from Iulia Tymoshenko. Of course, this is just his best guesstimate, and 20% sounds extremely high to me, but he is the expert with deep connections on all levels in the Ukraine. What is certain – and everybody agrees on that – is that the fraud was massive, way bigger than in any previous Ukrainian election]

Will the Zionists replace the Nazis next?

First, I want to share with you [this ecstatic “victory speech”](#) by the The Tablet Magazine (“[daily online magazine of Jewish news, ideas, and culture](#)“) which, amongst many other interesting things, heaps lavish praise on Poroshenko for being so staunchly pious about the memory of the “Holocaust” and having Jewish aides:

Poroshenko will likely be remembered by the history books as the president who was most attentive to the work of honoring Holocaust [memory](#) since Ukraine gained its independence from Russia during the collapse of the Soviet Union. The 75th anniversary of the Babi Yar massacre, held in 2016, was an international event conducted by Poroshenko and his administration with immense tact and generosity. Poroshenko has also been personally comfortable with Jewish aides, including both of his chiefs of staff and the country’s current prime minister, Volodymyr Groysman. Poroshenko will likely be remembered by the history books as the president who was most attentive to the work of honoring Holocaust memory since Ukraine gained its independence from Russia during the collapse of the Soviet Union. The 75th anniversary of the Babi Yar massacre, held in 2016, was an international event conducted by Poroshenko and his administration with immense tact and generosity. Poroshenko has also been personally comfortable with Jewish aides, including both of his chiefs of staff and the country’s current prime minister, Volodymyr Groysman.

Amazing, no? Zionist praise for a Nazi junta leader? In fact, there is absolutely nothing amazing about that at all, not any more amazing than the so-called “[Christians United For Israel](#)“. I have always maintained that Zionism and National-Socialism are two sides of the same coin, born from the same ugly womb (European secular nationalism) and that all that separates them is a flipped hierarchical scale, that’s all. Fundamentally, Nazis and Zionists are twin brothers, even if deep down they hate (and often admire!) each other.

The Tablet article goes on to mention that while Tymoshenko is hiding her Jewish roots, Zelenskii does not. In fact, Zelenskii is just a glorified puppet and everybody in the Ukraine knows that his puppet-master is Igor Kolomoiskii who is waiting out the final outcome of the Presidential election safely hidden in, you guessed it, Israel. This is how the Tablet concludes:

The transformation wrought in Ukraine by the Maidan revolution has been an exhilarating roller coaster that has not bypassed Ukrainian Jewry, which is now in the midst of an exciting period of cultural revival paralleling that of the wider Ukrainian society, which is still just beginning to rediscover its own past and imagine an independent future. Whether this post-Soviet country will choose to elect an openly Jewish president, or a part-Jewish president, or continue with its current philo-Semitic president, the future of Ukraine's Jews would appear to be brighter than anyone might reasonably have imagined.

This really says it all, doesn't it?

So yes, if Zelenskii gets elected in the 2nd round, this will be a huge victory for the transnational "Grand Israel" otherwise known as the AngloZionist Empire. But can Zelenskii really get elected and will the Nazis accept defeat?

Comparing Poroshenko and Zelenskii

Where Poroshenko was the ultimate apparatchik Zelenskii is the ultimate outsider and just as the people of the USA did not vote "for" Trump as much as they voted "against" Hillary, so the people of the Ukraine did not really vote "for" Zelenskii, but "against" Poroshenko. In fact, Zelenskii does not have anything resembling a political program (only vague and nice sounding slogans) and he most certainly has no other political record other than being a standup comedian and actors in several (pretty good) satirical series. Frankly, it appears that Zelenskii was as stunned by his victory as Trump was by his. Still, in theory, it is almost impossible for Poroshenko to win this one. Not only do all the other candidates



A Jewish law student turned stand-up comedian as President of the Ukraine next?



This time her basic instinct let her down

hate Poroshenko way more than they would dislike Zelenskii, voters for Tymoshenko or Boiko are far more likely to vote for Zelenskii than for Poroshenko.

This creates an extremely dangerous situation: **Poroshenko can only win by a massive fraud.**

Now Tymoshenko did declare that the first round was stolen, but she decided not to appeal this officially. Furthermore, it is now apparent that Tymoshenko was ditched by most of her US supporters, something which she clearly did not expect and which came as a total shock to her, hence her stunned reaction to the announced figures. She has always been, and still is, a remarkably intelligent lady and a very calculating realist: she simply knows that an official rejection of the outcome from her would make no difference. But you can be sure that behind the scenes the interests Tymoshenko represents are now talking to the people of Kolomoiskii and that Poroshenko is fully aware of that.

In spite of being the most universally hated politician in the Ukraine, Poroshenko managed, *in extremis*, not only to get into the 2nd round but he also managed to be opposed by a weak and generally ridiculous opponent like Zelenskii whom he would crush in a debate (which Zelenskii will probably refuse precisely for this reason) rather than against a formidable opponent by any measure like Tymoshenko. So that part of the plan worked. What did not work is that the Nazis clearly under-estimated how hated they have become.

Conclusion: a very interesting and very dangerous situation

Poroshenko is now truly cornered: he absolutely must win, or he must run. In order to win, his options are very limited: he can do more of the same (buy and/or steal votes), of course, but that is unlikely to be sufficient. But a massive crisis of some kind, preferably against Russia (of course!) would come in really handy right now. I hope that the Kremlin has placed everybody on high alert as the danger of a provocation (especially a false flag) are higher than ever before.

Another very real possibility in case of a Zelenskii victory is an violent insurrection by the Ukronazi death-squads (known as “*dobrobats*” in Ukrainian). Such an armed insurrection could have the support of key units and individuals in the police and security forces. Should that happen, it is very possible that Moscow would officially refuse to deal with the new junta and declare that Russia recognizes the Lugansk and Donetsk people’s republics which, paradoxically, could be a great deal for the

Ukronazis as this would trigger a crisis serious enough to justify martial law and any imaginable crackdown in civil and human rights.

Alternatively, if Poroshenko comes up with some kind of pretext to either cancel the 2nd round or with some trick to prevent Zelenskii from participating, then there is a very real risk that the 80%+ of people who voted against Poroshenko and who hate the current regime with all their heart will protest, possibly violently. We can be sure that the repression will be ruthless and violent.

For all these reasons the situation right now is the most dangerous one since the Euromaidan.

The key issue here is what will the AngloZionist Empire decide? The problem here is that it has been years since the USA has had anything even vaguely resembling a “US foreign policy”. Under Obama and, even more so under Mr MAGA, the State Department has become just a public information agency whose sole role is to deliver either sanctions, or threats, or both. This is absolutely crucial so I will repeat it:

==>>There is no such thing as a “US foreign policy”<<==

What we do see is key agencies, actors, individuals all having their own “mini foreign policies” which sometimes brings about goofy results (like when the CIA and the Pentagon support different sides in a conflict). In fact, the two main branches of Ukrainian politics – Nazis and Zionists – are both richly represented in the US government and various entities support different candidates and different agendas. The same is also true for the EU, but since the EU is almost irrelevant (Victoria Nuland was quite right about that), this does not matter.

It would be an exaggeration to say that the US lost control of the Ukraine, but Trump clearly cares very little about the Ukronazis and as for Trump’s puppet masters, they don’t seem to be able to agree on a single policy towards this issue. Hence we see in the Ukraine what we see everywhere in Trump’s pretend foreign policy: absolute, total chaos.

What about Russia in all this?

Right now the big debate in Russia is “to recognize the outcome of this election or not?”. Both sides have very strong arguments and the Kremlin keeps making very vague statements clearly waiting for the outcome of the 2nd round of the election.

This is a very tricky question made even more complex by a growing realization amongst many observers that recognizing the Poroshenko regime the first time around was a big mistake. Personally, it seems to me that at this point in time all the Kremlin can do is wait and see what will take place. After all, Poroshenko is truly cornered and there is a high likelihood that he will do something dramatic to avoid a 2nd round of voting. Consider this:

The infamous Minister of the Interior, Arsen Avakov, arguably currently the most powerful and dangerous man in the Ukraine, has made a [most interesting statement](#) about Zelenskii:

“A decent man from another world. From another plane. Ready to deal with problems, but at the same time recognizing that in many issues he is not fully competent. In my understanding, this means that he is ready to delegate authority. However, the question arises: can we – Ukrainian society – offer the quality of the elite, which can be entrusted with the implementation of such powers? After all, if he delegates authority to scoundrels – as it happens in some series of “Servants of the people” – it will be very bad for the country. Using expats is also not an option...”(...) “He knows for sure that from point A it is necessary to come to point B, and I am ready to agree with it. But the problem is how to go this way. Often, if you go head-on, you will crash into a wall or break. Therefore, it is necessary to choose the right path – and here should work competent and honest specialists”

In plain English this simply means: Zelenskii has no personal power base, he will be a puppet, so he better offer me a good deal (“*delegate authority*“), or I will turn against him and, how knows, an unpredictable accident (“*you will crash into a wall or break*“) can easily happen. Shocking? Welcome to “Ukrainian thug politics”! Besides, if the Nazis decide to kill Zelenskii they can easily blame it on Russia. Either that, or on a “lone, deranged, gunman” which they can find in the thousands amongst the various Nazi death-squads.

Right now the Nazis are in a total panic, they are declaring that Zelenskii’s victory is “Moscow’s triumph”, they say that Zelenskii will sell out everything Ukrainian and that he is a Putin agent. At the very least, they will now dig up as much dirt on Zelenskii as possible (whether real or manufactured). Thus literally anything can happen in the next couple of weeks, ranging from some kind of scandal in Zelenskii’s past to a Ukronazi attack on the Donbass.

This is why the Kremlin must now wait and see what happens next.

However, since in practical and political terms the difference between Poroshenko and Zelenskii is roughly the difference between Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola, the Kremlin knows that no matter who actually wins, the russophobic policies of the current Ukonazi regime will not change. Furthermore, there is an increasingly vocal segment of the Russian public opinion which is totally fed-up and disgusted with the Ukonazis and which now demands a much tougher stance towards the Ukraine.



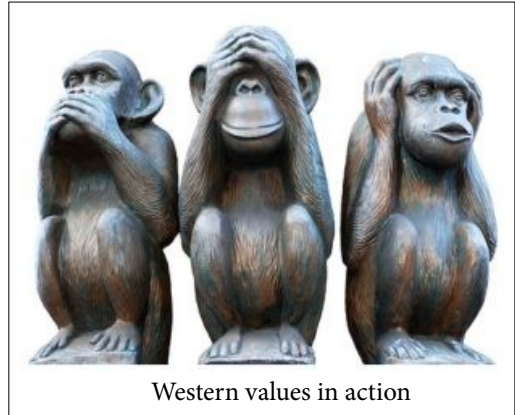
The kind of “Ukraine” the Empire approves of: obedient entertainers and jesters for the “indispensable nation”

In truth, there is a broader unfavorable context which makes a redefinition of Russia’s policies towards her neighbors both urgently needed and very delicate: two key Russian allies (or “assumed allies”?) like Belarus and Kazakhstan are acting in very ambiguous and sometimes even anti-Russian manner and there is clearly a renewed effort of the Empire to break these two countries out of the Russian sphere of influence and subordinated them to AngloZionist interests. Right now the Kremlin is trying to appease Lukashenko by giving him even more money ([\\$600 million](#)) and I am not so sure that this is the right approach. As for Kazakhstan, so far the Russians are pretending that all is well and dandy in spite of the fact that an increasing number of ethnic Russians are, again, leaving the country and seeking refuge in Russia. Frankly, there is only that much one can get with carrots, and holding a visible stick might be more helpful in this case, especially considering that the Empire has many more “carrots” (money) to offer than Russia.

If insanity is doing the same thing expecting different results, it is time for the Russians to come up with new policies towards their most important neighbors. If not, then “more of the same, only worse” is all Russia will get.

As for the Empire, it does what it always does

Finally, I want to conclude here by focusing on the absolutely despicable, revolting and totally hypocritical self-induced blindness of the West about this election. If all this had happened in Russia (or Venezuela, or Iran) the entire united West would be up in arms denouncing the 'stolen election' and threatening fire and brimstone if the Russians did not immediately fall on their knees and kiss the Emperor's ring (I wonder what kind of ring,



if any, Trump has) or something to that effect. But since the toxic regime of Ukronazis *cum* Zionists in Kiev is "our son of a bitch", the leaders of the Empire are acting like the three monkeys: see nothing, hear nothing and, above all, say nothing.

Truly, the AngloZionist Empire must be the most hypocritical and dishonest in world history. Think of it:

Pretty much all the candidates have declared that this election was stolen. As did all the Ukrainian media not controlled by Poroshenko. Not only that, but millions (some estimates are as high as 10 million) of Ukrainians (mostly, but not only, aboard) were prevented from voting. Thousands of complaints were officially lodged. But no, the global West did not notice. As for the US, it declared this election free and fair (now there is a surprise!).

At the very least, the Empire could have made a (very credible) "Guaido" out of Tymoshenko (who clearly should have been either first or second), but she was ditched, probably as way too smart and too potentially independent minded: the Empire likes its puppet to be stupid, or drunk, or both (think Eltsin or Poroshenko here). Having to chose between two non-entities like Zelenskiii or Poroshenko is much preferable for the Neocons than to have to deal with a smart women like Tymoshenko and, thus, no amount of russophobia on her part will be sufficient to reassure the World Hegemon that she is worth preserving.

The Saker

UPDATE: as usual, the Ukie politics does stuff which is almost impossible to imagine. This time around, Zelenskii accepted to debate Poroshenko but on 2 conditions: they would both take a blood/urine test to check for psychotropic substances (not sure about alcohol) and the debate would take place... ... in a stadium with 70'000 people! Poroshenko accepted and both candidates were seen on local TV giving their blood for testing (no, I am not joking!). This is going to be amazing! 35'000 pro-Nazis plus another 35'000 pro-Zionists in one stadium, these two clowns (Poroshenko is even more a clown than Zelenskii, except that he is not funny at all) will be debating each other on live TV in the middle. Your guess is as good as mine as to whether this will ever happen, but if it does, it will be truly a moment to behold :-)

Will the Trump administration go to war next?

April 10, 2019

Ever since Mr. MAGA made it to the White House, I have been awed by the level of sheer stupidity and, frankly, the immorality of this administration. Obama was almost as incompetent and evil, but Trump truly brought about a qualitative change in what we could loosely refer to as the “average White House IQ.” The best thing I can honestly say about Trump is that [stupid can be good](#). Alas, it can also be extremely dangerous, and that is what is happening now. Just check out these recent headlines:

- [Trump signs declaration recognizing Israel’s sovereignty over disputed Golan Heights](#)
- [Moscow believes Western sabotage caused Venezuelan blackout](#)
- [Explosions in Venezuela confirmed as a terrorist sabotage](#)
- [US designates Iran’s Revolutionary Guards as terrorist organization – Trump](#)
- [Pompeo to Turkey: Military Action in Syria Will Have ‘Devastating’ Consequences](#)

I have to admit that this last one is my favorite, really! How cool is that? The US threatens a NATO member state with war (that is what “devastating/serious consequences” means in diplotalk).

Pompeo (surely one of the most evil and delusional idiots in the Trump Administration) was probably trying to emulate the role-model of this entire Administration, Bibi Netanyahu, who [once even threatened *New Zealand* with war](#) (well, kinda, I know, they did not really mean “real” war, but they did use war language, which, for a politician, is irresponsible at best).

This would all be very funny if not for the fact that it is pretty obvious that the USA is already engaged in a covert military/terrorist campaign against Venezuela and that the fact that the Maduro government has successfully foiled the “Guaidó revolution” (at least so far) only further enrages the likes of Pompeo. Besides, the fact that the US military does not appear to have the stomach for a ground invasion does not at all mean that they cannot trigger a Kosovo or Libya type of bombing and missile campaign against Venezuela.

Will the covert war against Venezuela soon turn into an overt one?

Those who now claim that three Russian S-300 air defense battalions (equipped with the export version of the S-300VM – the “Antey-2500”) or even thousands of Russian-made MANPADS can stop the USA simply don’t understand warfare in general and air-defense operations specifically. What these folks do is to take a few figures about, in this case, the theoretical capabilities of the Venezuelan S-300s and then compute how many aircraft/missiles these systems could shoot down. That is not how air defenses work.

*[Sidebar: I won't write a detailed explanation about this topic here. My friend [Andrei Martyanov](#) can do that much better than I, but I will just say that to be truly effective, any air defense system has to be 1) multi-level and 2) integrated. Furthermore, such pseudo-analyses as mentioned above always overlooks the importance of all other factors besides the number and characteristics of the missiles themselves. But in reality, electronic warfare, network integration, signal processing, combat management systems, etc. play **an absolutely crucial role** in air defenses. Even deceptive measures (such as inflatable “tanks” or wooden “aircraft”) can play a central role in the outcome (as it did in Kosovo and Iraq). The same goes for offensive air operations, of course. Thus no evaluation of a possible US air attack on Venezuela can be made without analyzing US capabilities, training, procedures, etc. The truth is that what military experts call “bean counting” is what only pretend-experts engage in. From a military point of view this is entirely useless and futile]*

The sad truth is that absent a multi-level integrated air defense system like Russia has, air defense operations typically turn into a simple numbers game: X number of defensive missiles vs. Y number of attackers. Keep in mind that effective EW (especially [SEAD](#)) will *dramatically* reduce the effectiveness of any air defenses. The same applies to whatever number of Su-30 or even Su-35s Russia might deliver to Venezuela.

Now, look at a map and see for yourself: Venezuela is literally in the USA’s backyard (at least in military terms), and the US can bring HUGE numbers of whatever it wants (missiles, bombs, SEAD aircraft, etc.) to the fight. Not only that, but the Venezuelans lack any real counter-attack options, which means that Uncle Shmuel can fire off as many missiles as he wants for weeks and months without ever having to worry about a counter-strike.

It is only political factors protecting Venezuela from an overt US attack, not military factors. The latter are not irrelevant, of course, and I discussed them [here](#). In military terms, Venezuela is a sitting duck which might be able to deter a ground operation, but which can do nothing against US standoff striking capabilities, at least not against a determined US effort. Against a *pretend*-strike, like what the Israelis and the USA did in Syria, the Venezuelans could probably meaningfully degrade the number of US bombs/missiles reaching their targets. But that is all they can reasonably hope for.

What about Syria?

Well, the AngloZionists sure lost the first phase of this war, but they remain unwilling to come to terms with that fact. So now they have defined-down their objectives from “a new Middle-East” or the “animal Assad must go” to “we will never allow peace to break out in Syria.” Not much of a strategy, but that’s is good enough for the Israelis, and that’s all that really matters to Trump or his masters. I don’t want to cover Syria in detail right now, but the simple fact that Pompeo is issuing threats against Turkey really says it all. The Turkish reaction was quite predictable: Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay declared that “*The United States must choose. Does it want to remain Turkey’s ally or risk our friendship by joining forces with terrorists to undermine its NATO ally’s defense against its enemies?*”

Feel the love?!

Yes, these are only words, and Turkey remains under NATO/CENTCOM occupation (CENTCOM, which [the Iranians have – quite logically- just declared a terrorist organization!](#)). Still, between the S-400 vs. F-35, the Kurdish issue, the CIA continuous support for Fethullah Gülen or the fact that the (US-controlled) EU never accepted Turkey, all create a potentially explosive background which even a small spark could ignite.

It is equally clear that both the US and Israel will continue to conduct airstrikes, assassinations, support for Takfiri terrorist groups, etc., in Syria for the foreseeable future. Trump’s famous withdrawal from Syria will end up like all his promises: tossed down the memory hole. As for the Israelis, it is absolutely vital (for psychological and ideological reasons) for them to continue to subvert not only Syria but the entire Middle-East. Furthermore, we should *never* forget the Israeli end-goal: to use the

USA to destroy any country daring to resist Israeli aggression. On top of that list, there is, of course, Iran.

Simply put: there will be no peace in the Middle-East as long as Palestine is occupied by a gang of racist thugs whose contempt for international law or even basic norms of civilized behavior is as total as their total reliance on deception and violence to subjugate the region and, eventually, our entire planet. Of course, Russia and China will help, as will Iran, but that is unlikely to be enough to achieve a lasting peace (if anything, the latest Israeli statements about annexing even more of Palestine are an indicator of more bad things to come).

The truth is that while the Empire does not have the power to break the will of the Syrian people, it has plenty enough strength left to prevent peace from breaking out in Syria.

Or Iran?

Who knows? It is possible to predict the actions of a rational actor. “Rational” implies a minimal degree of intelligence and sanity. The problem is that we cannot be sure about the intelligence of the folks currently remaining on duty at the Pentagon while we can be absolutely sure that the Israelis are completely insane and delusional (as racists always are). So far, the Israelis have failed to get the US to attack Iran. Clearly, there were some intelligent and sane people at the Pentagon (in the [tradition of Admiral Fallon](#)) but how sure can we be that by now they have not all been purged (or corrupted) by the Neocon regime?

[Sidebar: when I speak of the stupidity of the US leaders, I don't mean that as an insult. I mean that in a diagnostic sense: these folks are simply not very bright. Check out Dmitry Orlov's excellent "[Is the USS Ship of Fools Taking on Water?](#)" for a very good discussion of the increasingly important role stupidity is playing in the actions of the Empire. And Orlov is not the only one thinking this. By now most Russians are pretty convinced that stupidity and gross incompetence is what best characterizes US decision-making. If it wasn't for the very real risks of war, the Russians would spend their time laughing at the cluelessness of the "indispensable nation's" leaders...]

When I look at the fact that, at least so far, the US has not dared overt military aggression against Venezuela, I cannot imagine anybody at the Pentagon or

CENTCOM having the stomach for a war against Iran. But, again, I am assuming intelligence and sanity, which applies neither to Mr. MAGA nor to the Israelis.

The DPRK? The Ukraine? Libya? Country X?

In strategic analysis, one should never say never, but I submit that the chances of a full-scale US military attack on the DPRK, in the Ukraine, in Libya or against Country X (replace X with whatever country you like) are slim. Frankly, that train has already left the station. Of course, “Country X” is vague enough to remain a possibility at least in theory (maybe some new tiny “Grenada” can be identified to, in [Michael Ledeen’s immortal words](#) “*throw it against the wall, just to show the world we mean business*” (after all, that is what this great American hero – Reagan – did after the US had to run from Lebanon), but unless the Trump Administration reaches a new level of incompetence, arrogance, and insanity, I don’t see where Uncle Shmuel might decide to “restore democracy” next.



Any guess as to where these “indispensable” folks will restore democracy next?

Conclusion: Venezuela still in the cross-hairs or already under attack?

When dealing with a terminally dysfunctional administration like the Trump Administration (just look at how often people get sacked or resign from it! Check [here](#) for the latest case), we have to assume that it is capable of the worst, most illogical, and even catastrophically self-defeating actions. An overt attack on Venezuela would undoubtedly fall into this category. We, therefore, need to set aside all the many statements made by various US officials (whether threatening or appeasing) and look at what the US is actually already doing. When we do that, we see

that *the US is already engaged in warfare against Venezuela*, even if this warfare is mostly covert. Furthermore, this covert warfare has failed, at least so far. However, and even more worrisome, the US has paid very little, if any, political price for its completely illegal aggression against Venezuela. So the real question is not whether the US will decide to launch a full-scale overt military aggression against Venezuela but whether there *are any factors which would inhibit the US from crossing the deniability threshold?*

I can think of at least one such factor: the inevitable blow-back against any “Yankee” military intervention in the Latin American public opinion and the subsequent and potentially severe consequences for US puppets (*à la* Bolsonaro for example) and various comprador regimes (in Colombia for example) on the continent. Other than that, my biggest hope is that the debacle in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere will be sufficient to persuade US officials that one more military disaster would not yield any benefits to their interests.

The clock is running and the Neocon gang in the White House has to decide either way – blame it all on somebody else (the Venezuelan people, the Russians, the Chinese, Hezbollah, Iran, Martian extraterrestrials, etc.) and leave or try an overt military intervention and hope that things go better than they always do.

What do you think? Will the Trump Administration go to war and, if yes, where?

The Saker

PS: quick Ukrainian update: neither Poroshenko nor Zelenskii have anything resembling a real program (albeit Zelenskii just released a 10-point “plan” which is simply silly, no point in discussing it now). Since both of them will be US puppets, this is not a big problem: the course of the Ukraine will not change as a result of this election anyway. Poroshenko’s campaign is weak, he is trying to cater to the Russian speaking population (he even goes as far as sometimes speaking in Russian, which is technically illegal for him!), but that is way too late by now: everybody hates him and the regime he represents. Zelenskii, in contrast, has a very dynamic and effective campaign – mostly videos – in which he says stuff which Poroshenko could never say. Most observers, including myself, think that since the 2nd round of voting is a competition of anti-ratings (negative perception) Zelenskii will win. Time is running out for Poroshenko, he better come up with something dramatic, or he needs to run.

As for Yulia Vladimirovna, she clearly is in discussions with the Zelenskii people to see if they can form a political coalition in the Rada. I believe that these negotiations will be kept secret until the 2nd tour, at which point a “coalition of Zelenskii supporting factions” will be created in the Rada.

The Saker interviews Dmitry Orlov

April 16, 2019

“I think that the American empire is very much over already, but it hasn’t been put to any sort of serious stress test yet, and so nobody realizes that this is the case”

If I had to characterize the current international situation using only one word, the word “chaos” would be a pretty decent choice (albeit not the only one). Chaos in the Ukraine, chaos in Venezuela, chaos everywhere the Empire is involved in any capacity and, of course, chaos inside the USA. But you wouldn’t know that listening to the talking heads and other “experts” who serve roughly the same function for the Empire as the orchestra did on the Titanic: to distract from the developing disaster(s) for as long as possible.

I decided to turn to the undisputed expert on social and political collapse, [Dmitry Orlov](#) whom I have always admired for his very logical, non-ideological, comparative analyses of the collapse of the USSR and the USA. The fact that his detractors have to resort to crude and, frankly, stupid *ad hominem*s further convinces me that Dmitry’s views need to be widely shared. Dmitry very kindly agreed to reply to my questions in some detail, for which I am most grateful. I hope that you will find this interview as interesting as I did.

The Saker

The Saker: How would you assess the current situation in the Ukraine in terms of social, economic and political collapse?

Dmitry Orlov: The Ukraine has never been viable as an independent, sovereign state and so its ongoing disintegration is to be expected. The applicability of the concept of collapse is predicated on the existence of an intact, stand-alone entity capable of collapse, and with the Ukraine this is definitely not the case. Never in its history has it been able to stand alone as a stable, self-sufficient, sovereign entity. As soon as it gained independence, it just fell over. Just as the Baltics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), it had reached its peak of economic and social development just as the USSR was about to collapse, and it has been degenerating and losing population ever

since. Thus, the right model for discussing it is not one of sudden collapse but of steady degeneration and decay.

The Ukraine's territory was stuck together by the Bolsheviks—first by Lenin, then by Stalin, then by Khrushchev. It was Lenin who lumped in its eastern regions (Donetsk and Lugansk specifically) who previously were part of Russia proper. Stalin then added eastern lands, which were at various times Polish, Austro-Hungarian or Romanian. Finally, Khrushchev tossed in Russian Crimea in a move that was unconstitutional at the time, since no public referendum had been held in Crimea to decide this question as was required by the Soviet constitution.

Prior to this Bolshevik effort, “Ukraina” was not used as a proper political or geographic designation. The territory was considered part of Russia, distinguished from the rest by a prefix “Malo-” (small) and called “Malorossiya. The word “ukraina” is simply an archaic form of the Russian word “okraina” (outskirts, border land). This is why the definite article “the” is required: the Ukraine is literally “the outskirts of Russia.” The Soviets endowed this border land with a make-believe identity and forced many of its inhabitants to officially declare their ethnicity as “Ukrainian” in a successful bid to gain an additional seat at the UN.

This political concoction was supposedly held together by a Ukrainian ethnic identity, which is itself a concoction. The Ukrainian language is some combination of southern Russian village dialects with a bit of Polish thrown in as flavoring. It has a lilt to it that Russians find enchanting, making it well suited for folk songs. But it never had much practical merit, and the working language of the Ukrainians was always Russian. Even today Ukrainian nationalists switch to Russian if the subject matter is demanding enough. Religiously, most of the population has been for many centuries and still is Russian Orthodox.

In my conversations about the Ukraine with many Ukrainians over the years I discovered a shocking truth: unlike the Russians, the Ukrainians seem to have exactly zero ethnic solidarity. What binds them together is their commonality of historical experience as part of the Russian Empire, then the USSR, but this historical legacy is being actively erased. After the Soviet collapse and Ukrainian independence there followed a campaign to de-Sovietize and de-Russianize the Ukraine, deprecating this common historical legacy and replacing it with a synthetic Ukrainian identity based on a falsified history that is alien to most of the population. This fake history lionizes

Nazi collaborators and attempts to rub out entirely all memory of the Ukraine's once very active role in the larger Russian world.

Thus we have a mostly Russian-speaking, historically mostly Russian territory where most of the people speak either Russian (some of them with an accent) or a sort of Ukrainian patois called Surzhik, which is Ukrainian-sounding but with mostly Russian words (the overlap between the two languages is so great that it is difficult to draw the line between them). Supposedly proper Ukrainian is spoken in the west of the country, which had never been part of the Russian Empire, but it's a dialect that is mostly unintelligible in the rest of the country.

In spite of this confused linguistic situation, Ukrainian was imposed as the language of instruction throughout the country. Lack of textbooks in Ukrainian and lack of teachers qualified to teach in Ukrainian caused the quality of public education to plummet, giving rise to several generations of Ukrainians who don't really know Ukrainian, have had little formal instruction in Russian, and speak a sort of informal half-language. More recently, laws have been passed that severely restrict the use of Russian. For example, people who have never spoken a word of Ukrainian are now forced to use it in order to shop or to obtain government services.

The artificial, synthetic Ukrainian identity is too thin to give the country a sense of self or a sense of direction. It is a purely negative identity: Ukraine is that which is not Russia. The resulting hole in public consciousness was plugged by making a cargo cult of European integration: it was announced that the Ukraine was leaving the Russian world behind and joining the European Union and NATO. Most recently the intent to join the EU and NATO was written directly into the Ukrainian constitution. In the meantime, it has become abundantly clear that neither EU nor NATO membership is the least bit likely, or necessary: the EU got everything it wanted from the Ukraine by forcing it to sign the Association Agreement while giving nothing of value in return; and Ukrainian territory already serves as a playground for NATO training exercises.

Thus, with regard to social collapse, there really isn't much to discuss, because the term "Ukrainian society" has very little basis in reality. If we drop the conceit that the Ukraine is a country that can be viable if separated from Russia, what can we say about its chances as part of a Greater Russia?

Here I have to digress to explain the difference between a proper empire and the USSR. A proper empire functions as a wealth pump that sucks wealth out of its

imperial possessions, be they overseas, as in the case of the British Empire, or part of the periphery, as in the case of the Russian Empire. The latter inherited the traditions of the Mongol Empire that predated it. The Mongol term “tamga” was often used to indicate the annual tribute to be collected from newly conquered tribes as the Russian Empire expanded east. (Many of these tribes were previously Mongol subjects who understood the meaning of the term.)

Here is the key point: the USSR was not a normal empire at all. Instead of functioning as a wealth pump that pumped wealth from the periphery to the imperial center, it functioned as a revolutionary incubator, exploiting the resources of the core (Russia) and exporting them to the periphery to build socialism, with the further goal of fomenting global communist revolution. The various ethnic groups that were grossly overrepresented among the Bolsheviks were all from the periphery—the Jewish Pale, Byelorussia, the Ukraine, the Caucasus and the Baltics—and they thought nothing of sacrificing Mother Russia on the altar of world revolution.

Their revolutionary zeal was hindered by its utter lack of practical merit. As this came to be recognized, Leon Trotsky—the great exponent of world revolution—was first exiled, then assassinated. Later, when it became clear that without appealing to Russian patriotic sentiments the task of prevailing against Nazi Germany was unlikely to succeed, Stalin brought back the Russian Orthodox Church and made other efforts toward the restoration of Russian ethnic identity that were previously decried as retrograde and chauvinistic. There were significant setbacks to this process as well: in the 1940s a group of communist leaders from Leningrad attempted to promote Russian interests through regional cooperation. They were purged and suffered political repression in what became known as the “Leningrad affair.”

Luckily, the idea of Russia as a disposable staging ground for world communist revolution was never fully implemented. However, the tendency to exploit Russia for the benefit of its Soviet periphery remained intact. The USSR’s most significant leaders—Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev—were not Russian; Stalin was a Georgian while the latter two were Ukrainian. All the other Soviet republics had their own communist party organizations that developed cadres to send to Moscow, while Russia itself lacked such an organization. The inevitable result was that most of the other Soviet republics were able to suck resources out of Russia, making them far more prosperous than Russia itself.

Thus, the image of the USSR as a typical empire is simply wrong. The right mental image of the USSR is that of a prostrate, emaciated sow (Russia) being suckled by 14 fat, greedy piglets (the other Soviet Socialist Republics). For all his numerous failings, Boris Yeltsin did one thing right: he dismantled the USSR (although the way he went about it was beyond incompetent and verged on treason).

If you are in need of an explanation for why Russia is now resurgent, increasingly prosperous and able to invest vast sums in hypersonic weapons systems and in modernized infrastructure for its people, this is it: the 14 piglets had been sent off to root for themselves. This bit of perspective, by the way, puts paid to the rank idiocy of Zbigniew Brzezinski's "Grand Chessboard": his theory that Russia wants to be an empire but cannot do so without the Ukraine shatters on contact with the realization that Russia hasn't been an empire for over a century now and has no need or desire to become one again.

In any case, these days empires are a bit retro, you know, and not at all useful except as a way for silly Americans to finish bankrupting themselves. Russia needs reliable trading partners who can pay their own way, not ungrateful dependents clamoring for handouts. Just bringing Crimea up to Russia's contemporary standards after 30 years of Ukrainian neglect has turned out to be a monumental task; as far as doing that for the rest of the Ukraine—forget it!

So, armed with this perspective, what can we say about the Ukraine from the contemporary Russian perspective?

First and foremost, it is a freak show, as attested by the content of Russian talk shows on which Ukrainian experts appear as clownish, indestructible cartoon characters: whenever their risible arguments on behalf of the Ukraine blow up in their faces, for a moment they stand there charred and furious, then brush themselves off and appear in the next segment fresh as daisies. This freak show has certain didactic merit: it helps the Russian body politic develop powerful antibodies against Western hypocrisy, because it was Western meddling that has made contemporary Ukraine into the horrible mess it is. But this was, in a sense, inevitable: deprived of the Soviet teat, the Ukraine has been attempting to suckle up to the US and EU for 30 years now and, failing that, has been carving up and roasting its own loins.

Second, the Ukraine is a rich source of immigrants, having lost around a third of its population since independence. Much of its population qualifies as Russian:

linguistically, culturally and religiously they are perfectly compatible with the Russian population. Ukrainians are already the third most populous ethnic group within Russia (after Russians and Tatars) and Russia has been able to absorb the Ukrainians that have been fleeing to Russia in recent years. As the Ukraine's population dwindles, a natural sorting-out is taking place. Those who are most compatible with the Russian world tend to move to Russia while the rest go to Poland and other EU countries.

Lastly, there is a significant amount of fatigue in Russia with the Ukrainian subject. It is currently a major topic of discussion because of the farcical presidential elections currently taking place there, but more and more one hears the question: "Must we continue talking about this?" There just isn't anything positive to say about the Ukraine, and people tend to just shake their heads and switch to another channel. Thus, the final element of the Russian perspective on the Ukraine is that it's painful to look at and they would rather go look at something else.

However, this is not to be. For ample historical reasons, Russia remains the Ukraine's largest trade partner. Russian and Ukrainian economies were conceived of as a unit, based on the same set of plans, standards and regulations. In spite of concerted politically motivated efforts by Ukrainian leaders to sever these links, many of them have stubbornly remained in place, for lack of alternatives. Meanwhile, the Ukraine makes very little that the European Union or the rest of the world would want, and very little of it complies with EU's voluminous standards and regulations. Specifically, the EU has no use at all for Ukrainian manufactured goods, and primarily sees the Ukraine as a source of cheap raw materials and labor.

It is Russia that supplies the nuclear fuel for the Ukraine's aging nuclear power plants which provide well over half of all the electricity there, while Russian coal (anthracite, specifically) supplies much of the rest. But, for political reasons, Ukrainian officials are loath to admit the fact that the umbilical cord that connects the Ukraine to Russia cannot be severed. For example, they do not buy Russian natural gas directly but through intermediaries in the EU and at a mark-up (part of which they pocket). On paper, the Ukraine imports gas from the EU; physically, the methane molecules piped in from Russia never leave Ukrainian territory; they are simply diverted for local use.

By the time the USSR collapsed, the Ukraine was its most highly developed and possibly its richest part, and some people expected that, having thrown off the Soviet yoke, its future would be too bright to look at without goggles. It had abundant natural

resources (fertile land, coal) and an educated labor force. It manufactured numerous high-tech products such as jet aircraft, marine diesels, helicopter engines, rocket engines and much else that was the best in the world. Instead, what has occurred is several decades of thievery, stagnation and decay. By now the Ukraine has lost most of its industry and the Soviet-era infrastructure has decayed to the point where much of it is worn out and on the verge of collapse. Industry has shut down and the specialists it once employed have either retired or have gone off to work in Russia, in the EU or in the US. (Some Ukrainian rocket scientists have apparently gone off to work in North Korea, and this explains the DPRK's recent stunning successes in rocketry as well as its unlikely, exotic choice of rocket fuel: unsymmetrical dimethylhydrazine.)

The Saker: What about the Donbas republics? How would you compare the situation in Novorussia with what is taking place in the Ukraine?

Dmitry Orlov: The term “Novorossiya” (New Russia) goes back several centuries, to the time Catherine the Great expanded the Russian Empire to include Crimea and other southern possessions. What Lenin reassigned to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic were Russian lands, Donetsk and Lugansk regions among them.

There are several other Ukrainian regions that are almost entirely Russian—Kharkov and Odessa specifically—but Donetsk and Lugansk are not Ukrainian in the least. This is why, after the government overthrow of 2014, when it became clear that the intentions of the Ukrainian nationalists who seized power in Kiev were to oppress the Russian part of the population, these two regions decided to strike out on their own. The Ukrainian nationalists reacted by launching a civil war, which started exactly five years ago, and which they have lost. To save face, they have declared their defeat the result of a “Russian invasion” but have been unable to present any evidence of it. Had the Russians invaded, the result would have been a replay of Russia's action in Georgia in August of 2008, which lasted about a week.

The Ukrainians are continuing to lob missiles into the territories of Donetsk and Lugansk, causing sporadic civilian casualties. Once in a while they stage minor skirmishes, suffer casualties and pull back. But mostly their “Anti-Terrorist Operation,” which is what they are calling this civil war, has turned into a propaganda initiative, with the mythical “Russian invaders” invoked at every turn to explain their otherwise inexplicable string of defeats.

After some amount of effort by NATO instructors to train the Ukrainians, the instructors gave up. The Ukrainians simply laughed in their faces because it was clear to them that the instructors did not know how to fight at all. It was then decided that the “road map” for Ukraine’s inclusion in NATO should be set aside because the Ukrainians are just too crazy for sedate and sedentary NATO. The trainers were then replaced with CIA types who simply collected intelligence on how to fight a high-intensity ground war without air support—something that no NATO force would ever consider doing. Under such conditions NATO forces would automatically retreat or, failing that, surrender.

Meanwhile, the two eastern regions, which are highly developed economically and have a lot of industry, have been integrating ever more closely into the Russian economy. Their universities and institutes are now fully accredited within the Russian system of higher education, their currency is the ruble, and although in terms of international recognition they remain part of the Ukraine, it is very important to note that the Ukraine does not treat them as such.

The Ukrainian government does not treat the citizens of Donetsk and Lugansk as its citizens: it does not pay their pensions, it does not recognize their right to vote and it does not provide them with passports. It lays claim to the territory of Donetsk and Lugansk but not to the people who reside there. Now, genocide and ethnic cleansing are generally frowned upon by the international community, but an exception is being made in this case because of Russophobia: the Russian people living in Donetsk and Lugansk have been labeled as “pro-Russian” and are therefore legitimate targets.

Russia has been resisting calls to grant official recognition to these two People’s Republics or to provide overt military support (weapons and volunteers do filter through from the Russian side without any hindrance, although the flow of volunteers has been slowing down of late). From a purely cynical perspective, this little war is useful for Russia. If in the future the Ukraine fails completely and fractures into pieces, as appears likely, and if some of these pieces (which might theoretically include not just Donetsk and Lugansk regions but also Kharkov, Odessa and Dnepropetrovsk) clamor to join Russia, then Russia would face a serious problem.

You see, over the past 30 years most Ukrainians have been content to sit around drinking beer and watching television as their country got looted. They saw no problem with going out to demonstrate and protest provided they were paid to do it. They voted the way they were paid to vote. They didn’t take an issue with Ukrainian

industry shutting down as long as they could work abroad and send money back. They aren't enraged or even embarrassed by the fact that their country is pretty much run from the US embassy in Kiev. About the only ones with any passion among them are the Nazis who march around with torches and sport Nazi insignia. In short, these aren't the sort of people that any self-respecting country would want to have anything to do with, never mind absorb them into its population en masse, because the effect would be to demoralize its entire population.

But the people of Donetsk and Lugansk are not like that at all. These coal miners, factory workers and cab drivers have been spending days and nights in the trenches for years now, holding back one of Europe's larger militaries, and fighting for every square meter of their soil. If the Ukraine is ever to be reborn as something that Russia would find acceptable, it is these people who can provide the starter culture. They have to win, and they have to win without any help from the Russian military, which can squash the Ukrainian military like a bug, but what would be the point of doing that? Thus, Russia provides humanitarian aid, business opportunities, some weapons and some volunteers, and bides its time, because creating a viable new Ukraine out of a defunct one is a process that will take considerable time.

The Saker: What is your take on the first round of Presidential elections in the Ukraine?

Dmitry Orlov: The first round of the elections was an outright fraud. The object of the exercise was to somehow allow president Poroshenko to make it into the second round. This was done by falsifying as many votes as was necessary. In a significant number of precincts the turnout was exactly 100% instead of the usual 60% or so and counted votes from people who had moved, died or emigrated. All of these fake votes went to Poroshenko, allowing him to slither through to the second round.

Now the fight is between Poroshenko and a comedian named Vladimir Zelensky. The only difference between Poroshenko and Zelensky, or any of the other 30+ people who appeared on the ballot, is that Poroshenko has already stolen his billions while his contestants have not had a chance to do so yet, the only reason to run for president, or any elected office, in the Ukraine, being to put oneself in a position to do some major thieving.

Thus, there is an objective reason to prefer Zelensky over Poroshenko, which is that Poroshenko is a major thief while Zelensky isn't one yet, but it must be understood

that this difference will begin to equalize the moment after Zelensky's inauguration. In fact, the elites in Kiev are currently all aquiver over their ingenious plan to sell off all of Ukraine's land to foreign investors (no doubt pocketing a hefty "fee").

The platforms of all the 30+ candidates were identical, but this makes no difference in a country that has surrendered its sovereignty. In terms of foreign relations and strategic considerations, the Ukraine is run from the US embassy in Kiev. In terms of its internal functioning, the main prerogative of everyone in power, the president included, is thievery. Their idea is to get their cut and flee the country before the whole thing blows up.

It remains to be seen whether the second round of elections will also be an outright fraud and what happens as a result. There are many alternatives, but none of them resemble any sort of exercise in democracy. To be sure, what is meant by "democracy" in this case is simply the ability to execute orders issued from Washington; inability to do so would make Ukraine an "authoritarian regime" or a "dictatorship" and subject to "regime change." But short of that, nothing matters.

The machinations of Ukraine's "democrats" are about as interesting to me as the sex lives of sewer rats, but for the sake of completeness, let me flowchart it out for you. Poroshenko got into second round by outright fraud, because the loss of this election would, within the Ukrainian political food chain, instantly convert him from predator to prey. However, he was none too subtle about it, there is ample proof of his cheating, and the contender he squeezed out—Yulia Timoshenko—could theoretically contest the result in court and win. This would invalidate the entire election and leave Poroshenko in charge until the next one. Lather, rinse, repeat.

Another option would be for Poroshenko to cheat his way past the second round (in an even more heavy-handed manner, since this time he is behind by over 30%), in which case Zelensky could theoretically contest the result in court in win. This would invalidate the entire election and leave Poroshenko in charge until the next one. Lather, rinse, repeat. Are you excited yet?

None of this matters, because we don't know which of the two is the US State Department's pick. Depending on which one it is, and regardless of the results of any elections or lawsuits, a giant foot will come out of the sky and stomp on the head of the other one. Of course, it will all be made to look highly democratic for the sake of

appearances. The leadership of the EU will oblige with some golf claps while choking back vomit and the world will move on.

The Saker: Where is, in your opinion, the Ukraine heading? What is your best “guesstimate” of what will happen in the short-to-medium term future?

Dmitry Orlov: I believe that we will be subjected to more of the same, although some things can't go on forever, and therefore won't. Most worryingly, the Soviet-era nuclear power plants that currently provide most of the electricity in the Ukraine are nearing the end of their service life and there is no money to replace them. Therefore, we should expect most of the country to go dark over time. Likewise, the natural gas pipeline that currently supplies Russian gas to both the Ukraine and much of the EU is worn out and ready to be decommissioned, while new pipelines being laid across the Baltic and the Black Sea are about to replace it. After that point the Ukraine will lose access to Russian natural gas as well.

If the Ukrainians continue to surrender unconditionally while placating themselves with pipe dreams of EU/NATO membership, the country will depopulate, the land will be sold off to Western agribusiness, and it will become a sort of agricultural no man's land guarded by NATO troops. But that sort of smooth transition may be hard for the EU and the Americans to orchestrate. The Ukraine is rather highly militarized, is awash with weapons, full of people who have been circulated through the frontlines in Donbas and know how to fight, and they may decide to put up a fight at some point. It must be remembered that the Ukrainians, in spite of the decay of the last 30 years, still have something of the Russian fighting spirit in them, and will fight like Russians —until victory or until death. NATO's gender-ambivalent military technicians would not want to get in their way at all.

Also the dream of a depopulated Ukraine to be turned into a playground for Western agribusiness may be hindered somewhat by the fact that the Russians take a very dim view of Western GMOs and wouldn't like to see GMO-contaminated pollen blowing across their border from the West. They would no doubt find some least-effort way to make the attempt at Western agribusiness in the Ukraine unprofitable. Orchestrating a smallish but highly publicized radiation leak from one of the ancient Ukrainian nuke plants would probably work. Rather weirdly, Westerners think nothing of poisoning themselves with glyphosphate but are deathly afraid of even a little bit of ionizing radiation.

The Saker: What about the EU and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe? Where is the EU heading in your opinion?

Dmitry Orlov: The EU has a number of major problems. It isn't fiscally or monetarily healthy. As a whole, or as its constituent nations, it is no longer capable of the exercise of its full sovereignty, having surrendered it to the US. But the US is no longer able to maintain control, because it is internally conflicted to the point of becoming incoherent in its pronouncements. Overall, the structure looks like a matryoshka doll. You have the US, as a sort of cracked outer shell. Inside of it is NATO, which is an occupying force across most of Europe right up to the Russian border. It would be useless against Russia, but it can pose a credible threat of violence against the occupied populations. Inside of NATO is the EU—a political talking shop plus a sprawling bureaucracy that spews forth reams upon reams of rules and regulations.

Since none of this military/political superstructure is actually structural without the key ingredient of US hegemony, we shouldn't expect it to perform particularly well. It will continue as a talking shop while various national governments attempt to reclaim their sovereignty. British referendum voters have certainly tried to prod their government in that direction, and in response their government has been experimenting with various methods of rolling over and playing dead, but a different government might actually try to execute the will of the people. On the other hand, the governments of Hungary and Italy have made some headway in the direction of reasserting their sovereignty, with public support.

But nothing has really happened yet. Once the political elite of any nation has been thoroughly emasculated by the surrender of its national sovereignty, it takes a while for it to grow back its chest hair and to start posing a credible threat to transnational interests. Even in Russia it took close to a decade to thwart the political power and influence of the oligarchy. We can see that the empire is weakening and that some countries are starting to balk at being vassals, but nothing definitive has happened yet.

What may speed things up is that Europe, along with the US, appear to be heading into a recession/depression. One effect of that will be that all the East European guest workers working in the west will be forced to head back home. Another will be that EU's subsidies to its recent eastern acquisitions—Poland and the Baltics especially—are likely to be reduced substantially or to go away altogether. The influx of returning economic migrants combined with the lack of financial support are likely to spell the

demise of certain national elites which have been feasting on Western largesse in return for a bit of Russophobia.

We can imagine that this swirling tide of humanity, ejected from Western Europe, will head east, slosh against the Great Wall of Russia, and flood back into the west, but now armed with Ukrainian weapons and knowhow and entertaining thoughts of plunder rather than employment. There they will fight it out with newcomers from Middle East and Africa while the natives take to their beds, hope for the best and think good thoughts about gender neutrality and other such worthy causes.

These old European nations are all aging out, not just in terms of demographics but in terms of the maximum age allotted by nature to any given ethnos. Ethnoi (plural of “ethnos”) generally only last about a thousand years, and at the end of their lifecycle they tend to exhibit certain telltale trends: they stop breeding well and they become sexually depraved and generally decadent in their tastes. These trends are on full display already. Here’s a particularly absurd example: French birth certificates no longer contain entries for father and mother but for parent1 and parent2. Perhaps the invading barbarians will see this and die laughing; but what if they don’t?

No longer able to put up much of a fight, such depleted ethnoi tend to be easily overrun by barbarians, at which point they beg for mercy. In turn, based on the example of the late Roman Empire as well as similar ones from Chinese and Persian history, granting them mercy is one of the worst mistakes a barbarian can make: the result is a bunch of sexually depraved and generally decadent barbarians... to be easily overrun and slaughtered by the next bunch of barbarians to happen along.

What will spark the next round of Western European ethnogenesis is impossible to predict, but we can be sure that at some point a mutant strain of zealots will arrive on the scene, with a dampened instinct for self-preservation but an unslakable thirst for mayhem, glory and death, and then it will be off to the races again.

The Saker: What will happen once Nord Stream II is finished? Where is Europe heading next, especially in its relationship with the USA and Russia?

Dmitry Orlov: The new pipelines under the Baltic and the Black Sea will be completed, along with the second LNG installation at Sabetta, and Russia will go on supplying natural gas to Europe and Asia. I suspect that the fracking extravaganza in

the US is entering its end game and that the dream of large-scale LNG exports to Europe will never materialize.

The nations of Europe will gradually realize that its relationship with Russia is mostly beneficial while its relationship with the US is mostly harmful, and will make certain adjustments. The Ukraine, its natural gas pipeline system decrepit and beyond repair, will continue to import natural gas from Europe, only now the methane molecules will actually flow to it from the west rather from the east.

The Saker: How do you see the political climate in Russia? I hear very often that while Putin personally and the Kremlin's foreign policy enjoy a great deal of support, the pension reform really hurt Putin and that there is now an internal "patriotic opposition" (as opposed to paid and purchased for by the CIA & Co., which is becoming more vocal. Is that true?

It is true that there isn't much debate within Russia about foreign policy. Putin's popularity has waned somewhat, although he is still far more popular than any national leader in the West. The pension reform did hurt him somewhat, but he recovered by pushing through a raft of measures designed to ease the transition. In particular, all the benefits currently enjoyed by retirees, such as reduced public transit fees and reduced property taxes, will be extended to those nearing retirement age.

It is becoming clear that Putin, although he is still very active in both domestic and international politics, is coasting toward retirement. His major thrust in domestic politics seems to be in maintaining very strict discipline within the government in pushing through his list of priorities. How he intends to effect the transition to the post-Putin era remains a mystery, but what recently took place in Kazakhstan may offer some clues. If so, we should expect a strong emphasis on continuity, with Putin maintaining some measure of control over national politics as a senior statesman.

But by far the most significant change in Russian politics is that a new generation of regional leaders has been put into place. A great many governorships have been granted to ambitious young managers with potential for national office. They are of a new breed of thoroughly professional career politicians with up-to-date managerial skills. Meanwhile, a thorough cleaning out of the ranks has taken place, with some high-ranking officials doing jail time for corruption. What's particularly notable is that some of these new regional leaders are now as popular or more popular than Putin.

The curse of gerontocracy, which doomed the Soviet experiment, and which now afflicts the establishment in the US, no longer threatens Russia.

The Saker: You recently wrote an article titled "[Is the USS Ship of Fools Taking on Water?](#)" in which you discuss the high level of stupidity in modern US politics? I have a simple question for you: do you think the Empire can survive Trump and, if so, for how long?

Dmitry Orlov: I think that the American empire is very much over already, but it hasn't been put to any sort of serious stress test yet, and so nobody realizes that this is the case. Some event will come along which will leave the power center utterly humiliated and unable to countenance this humiliation and make adjustments. Things will go downhill from there as everyone in government in media does their best to pretend that the problem doesn't exist. My hope is that the US military personnel currently scattered throughout the planet will not be simply abandoned once the money runs out, but I wouldn't be too surprised if that is what happens.

The Saker: Lastly, a similar but fundamentally different question: can the USA (as opposed to the Empire) survive Trump and, if so, how? Will there be a civil war? A military coup? Insurrection? Strikes? A US version of the Yellow Vests?

Dmitry Orlov: The USA, as some set of institutions that serves the interests of some dwindling number of people, is likely to continue functioning for quite some time. The question is: who is going to be included and who isn't? There is little doubt that retirees, as a category, have nothing to look forward to from the USA: their retirements, whether public or private, have already been spent. There is little doubt that young people, who have already been bled dry by poor job prospects and ridiculous student loans, have nothing to look forward to either.

But, as I've said before, the USA isn't so much a country as a country club. Membership has its privileges, and members don't care at all what life is like for those who are in the country but aren't members of the club. The recent initiatives to let everyone in and to let non-citizens vote amply demonstrates that US citizenship, by itself, counts for absolutely nothing. The only birthright of a US citizen is to live as a bum on the street, surrounded by other bums, many of them foreigners from what Trump has termed "shithole countries."

It will be interesting to see how public and government workers, as a group, react to the realization that the retirements they have been promised no longer exist; perhaps that will tip the entire system into a defunct state. And once the fracking bubble is over and another third of the population finds that it can no longer afford to drive, that might force through some sort of reset as well. But then the entire system of militarized police is designed to crush any sort of rebellion, and most people know that. Given the choice between certain death and just sitting on the sidewalk doing drugs, most people will choose the latter.

And so, Trump or no Trump, we are going to have more of the same: shiny young IT specialists skipping and whistling on the way to work past piles of human near-corpses and their excrement; Botoxed housewives shopping for fake organic produce while hungry people in the back of the store are digging around in dumpsters; concerned citizens demanding that migrants be allowed in, then calling the cops as soon as these migrants set up tents on their front lawn or ring their doorbell and ask to use the bathroom; well-to-do older couples dreaming of bugging out to some tropical gringo compound in a mangrove swamp where they would be chopped up with machetes and fed to the fish; and all of them believing that things are great because the stock market is doing so well.

At this rate, when the end of the USA finally arrives, most of the people won't be in a position to notice while the rest won't be capable of absorbing that sort of upsetting information and will choose to ignore it. Everybody wants to know how the story ends, but that sort of information probably isn't good for anyone's sanity. The mental climate in the US is already sick enough; why should we want to make it even sicker?

The Saker: Dmitry, thank you so much for your time and for a most interesting interview!

The Ukrainian elections – a short preview of the coming attraction (UPDATED)

April 19, 2019

Mommy! Daddy! Look at the circus that came to town! :-)

Well, it sure looks like the Ukrainian elections will be very interesting after all. No, they probably won't change anything truly important, but what is taking place is most interesting indeed. I just want to mention a few things bullet-point style, not a real analysis (that will be for after the election), but maybe somewhat of a preview. So, here's what's on my list:

The total collapse of Poroshenko: I

just don't have the time to go into all the (admittedly sexy) details, but I can tell you that Poroshenko's campaign is in total disarray, every move he has made so far has been stupid and even counter-productive and after each one of these moves, his popularity score went even further down, without Zelenskii having to say a single word. At this point, the supporters of Poro (they are called the



“Porokhobots” in Russian) are desperate and most of them are switching sides as fast as they can (betraying just at the right moment, not too early and not too late, is a Ukrainian specialty and a skillset which Ukian political leaders have honed to perfection over the centuries!). Another very worrying development for Poro is that his political opponents (including the quite charismatic, if rather brutish, Nadezhna Savchenko) are being let go free from the jails they were being held in. Furthermore, [there are rumors](#) (unconfirmed so far) that the Ukrainian State Bureau of Investigations is prosecuting pretty much the entire Urkonazi regime for various crimes, which is also a pretty good indicator that the ship is sinking and the rats running for their lives...

Frankly, at this point I don't even think that Poro has the resources to pull off something significant as even his allies and aides are now abandoning him and

refusing to carry out this orders. He had a chance to try to pull-off some false flag or provocation, and he missed it. Now it appears to be too late even for that.

Zelenskii sitting very pretty: amazing, Zelenskii is both 1) doing great and 2) doing nothing. How is that for a winning strategy?! Really, I am not kidding, Poro's Uكرونazis are so busy committing political *seppuku* that all Zelenskii has to do is watch, laugh and wait. It is quite an amazing sight to hear Zelenskii limit himself to short telephone calls, short video messages and a few off the cuff comments. The guy is not even really campaigning at all! Yet, barring the unthinkable, he will win with a huge margin on Sunday. You can credit Kolomoiskii's money and advisors if you want, but the truth is that Zelenskii's "non-campaign" has been a devastatingly effective (not to mention cheap and easy) way to campaign.



A very merry puppet indeed!

Considering how clueless and non-presidential Zelenskii looks (and sounds every time he opens his mouth), I think that keeping him basically silent was not only the most effective technique, it was the only possible one.

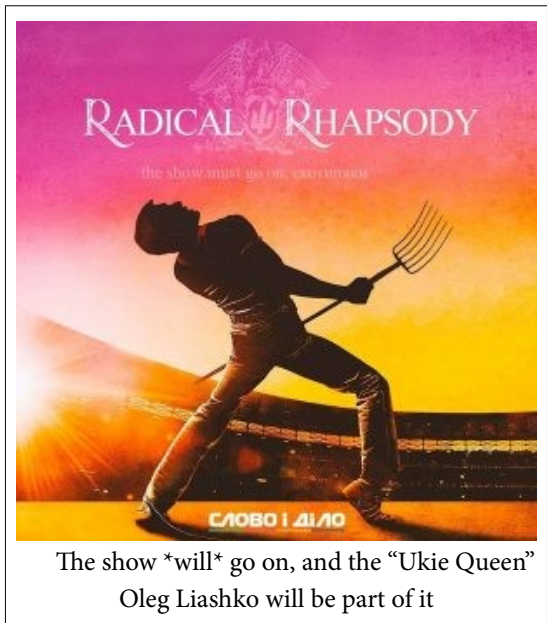
The hotly debated question: which outcome is better for Russia? Well, Poroshenko is not only an Uكرونazi, alcoholic and war criminal, he is also the Uber-loser guy who literally FUBARed everything he ever did, at least since he is in politics (Roshen chocolates are actually pretty good!). If Poro steals the election, which is the ONLY way he is going to stay in power, then Russia will have a perfect pretext to 1) not recognize the outcome of this election and 2) the opportunity to have the Ukies further destroy what is left of their sorry Banderastan without Russia having to do anything at all. Zelenskii is far more intelligent (not to mention sober) and he is much less likely to be an easy opponent. Furthermore, Zelenskii is Kolomoiskii's puppet, and the latter is both VERY evil and VERY smart. A most dangerous opponent for Russia. And then, we can be sure the the Zelenskii-Kolomoiskii duo will have the full support of the Zionists (thanks to Kolomoiskii's very close ties to Israel).

So while many in the Ukraine and Russia understandably hate Poroshenko with all their souls, I am not at all so sure that Zelenskii will be better for the Ukraine or for Russia. Somewhere, Poro would definitely be easier to handle.

This being said, I also understand that for the people of the Ukraine there is only one way to express their hatred and contempt for that Uber-loser Poroshenko. Voting Zelenskii in the presidential election followed by a vote for pro-Zelenskii parties in the Rada might be just what is needed to begin jailing various Nazis and other nutcases (I don't expect either Zelenskii or Kolomoiskii to have any patience with the Ukronazis, especially now that they have become a much bigger problem for the Ukraine than they have ever been for Russia).

As I said before, choosing between Zelenskii and Poro is about as meaningful as choosing between Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola. Having said that, Poro is the weaker, dumber, more isolated and more inept of the two, so he is probably a lesser evil for Russia.

What about the Donbass and the DNR/LNR People's Republics – what outcome is better for them? For the same reasons, I think that Poroshenko is probably the lesser evil for the Novorussians. Again, Poro and Zelenskii are both equally bad and even evil (Zelenskii has openly supported the Nazi death-squads and called the Novorussians “scum” – so have NO illusions on this account!) but Zelenskii and his backers are the more dangerous and sophisticated actors. The truth is that the Novorussians must first and foremost count on their own courage and military acumen, then they can count on Russia not only to stop any (theoretically possible) Ukronazi offensive, but also to keep these two republics alive economically and politically. Russia has done a lot, but not nearly enough and much more aid (both military and civilian) is needed by the suffering people of the Donbass.



So could *anything* good come from the election of Zelenskii? Yes, but it is not very likely. First, history is full of puppets who have broken away from their puppet masters. Don't necessarily think Obama or Trump here – these were both weak and cowardly people! Think Putin, for example. The US has a long and distinguished experience in losing control of its own puppets (Bin Laden, Saddam, Noriega, etc. etc. etc). So I would never say never. Especially since Zelenskii is young, clearly smart, and possibly courageous (dunno, too early to tell). In theory, Zelenskii could begin purging the most notorious Ukronazis. He could also pardon the thousands of Ukrainian political prisoners who are kept incommunicado and who are held in secret jails all over the country. By freeing them he could even make space for a lot of armed and dangerous Ukronazis nutcases who are roaming around the country freely and who represent a very real danger to Zelenskii (a group of west Ukrainian terrorists was recently caught near one of Zelenskii's residences; they had guns and even a DShK heavy machine gun mounted inside a car!). Again, in theory, Zelenskii might agree to some form of decentralization/federation which, by now, even the western Ukrainians want in increasing numbers. Finally, he might decide to cut his losses and make some kind of deal with Putin directly. Obviously, this would not be “Zelenskii's deal” with Putin, but the entire AngloZionist Hegemony telling Kolomoiskii what he can allow Zelenskii to say or do. How likely is that to produce any meaningful results?

After all, any Ukrainian politician in touch with reality will understand that making the Ukraine a monolithic state is a dead end, especially after many years of bloody civil war. As for any discussions about the future of Crimea – they are a total waste of time. Finally, I bet you that deep inside themselves the Ukrainian politicians understand that the Donbass, the LDNR, Novorussia – call it what you want – is gone forever and will never return under the control of Kiev (unless the regime in power in Kiev is one put into power by the Novorussians themselves).



How long will it take until they all get it?!

Conclusion: it will be pretty easy to tell what will happen next

If Poro steals the election, Russia will not recognize this election and the Ukraine will sink further into chaos, misery and violence.

Furthermore, Russia has (finally!) introduced some meaningful economic sanctions against the Ukraine, including a ban on the export of Russian oil and oil derivatives (a special government authorization can be requested for specific, special, cases).

If Zelenskii gets elected, one of two things will happen:

Option A: Zelenskii will rapidly and energetically resume all the rabid russophobic policies of his predecessor. The topics of the Donbass and Crimea will be front and center of Ukie propaganda. At this point, Russia might as well recognize the outcome of the election (I don't see a point in pretending that Zelenskii did not "kinda" get a popular mandate) and, in the same breath, recognize the two Novorussian Republics and let them conduct a referendum on their future.

Option B: Zelenskii will rapidly and energetically try to stop (or, at least, "freeze") the conflict with Russia and with the Donbass. If he does that, the Kremlin will see that Zelenskii is trying to cut his losses and gain political credibility by stopping the war in the Donbass and the (utterly stupid and self-defeating) confrontation with Russia. At this point, Russia is likely not only to recognize the outcome of the election, but also serve as a mediator between the Novorussians and the Zelenskii government in Kiev to offer some kind of compromise centered around a *de facto* independence of the two republics combined with some kind of *de jure* (only!) Ukrainian sovereignty over these republics, even if only symbolical.

At least so far, all the signs are that Zelenskii will go with Option A and resume Poro's antirussian policies which, considering that Zelenskii is a puppet of Kolomoiskii, who himself is a puppet of the AngloZionist Empire (with, in his case, the stress of the "Zionist" part of the name) certainly makes sense.

Last minute updates:

Thursday April 18th: Poroshenko recorded an address to the Ukrainian people in which he 1) apologizes for this mistakes and 2) blames all his mistakes on Putin. Go figure Ukronazi "logic"....

Thursday April 18th: Zelenskii did end up giving one real interview, in which he said that Putin was an enemy and that the Donbass should not have any special status. He also said that the fact that Stepan Bandera is a hero for many Ukrainians is “awesome/cool” (класно). Having a Russian-speaking Jew say this about a guy who pledged allegiance to Hitler and who massacred scores of Jews is rather amazing, especially on the eve of the Jewish Passover is quite a sight. But then again, the Nazi-occupied Ukraine is the kind of Banderastan where you find Nazis and Jews happily joining forces against their common foe: Russia in general and Orthodox Russia especially. So forget the (comparatively nicer looking) Zelenskii and think Kolomoiskii. In other words, *lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate*...



Friday April 19th: (1300 UTC) a debate between Poroshenko and Zelenskii is supposed to take place in a soccer stadium in Kiev. There will be two stages, one for each candidate – this makes it easier to kill one and not the other; that, at least, is the explanation given by many in Kiev. Rumors about some kind of bomb, or sniper attack, or riots are circulating in the Ukrainian social media and tensions are very high. One of the main Ukronazi journalists has even begged Zelenskii not to go to this debate and asked him “do you want to be killed”? These rumors are all helping Zelenskii who is presenting himself like the young, innocent and sincere candidate facing the evil and corrupt state machine controlled by Poroshenko.



The separate “for TV kneeling” of the candidates

Friday April 19th: (1600 UTC) the much expected debate has begun. First surprise, Poro walked over to the Zelenskii stage. First Zelenskii spoke pretty poorly. Then Poro took the floor and immediately jumped on his favorite horse: Putin and Russia. He also pointed out that he is experienced whereas Zelenskii is a noob. After that, the debate became outright boring and of very low quality: the two candidates did not

answer each other's question, Zelenskii offered Poro to together stand on their knees before all the suffering Ukrainians, which Zelenskii himself proceeded to immediately do; Poro instead turned his back and kissed the Ukie flag (see screenshot of that bizarre moment on the right)

Friday April 19th: (1700 UTC) the debate is over. Frankly, both Poroshenko and Zelenskii did very poorly. Both tried a few cheap tricks, which mostly failed to elicit any major reaction, and now the “democratic charade” is over.

Barring something truly major and earth-shattering, Zelenskii will win. After that, we can expect Kolomoiskii to take control of most of the government within 30 days or less. Thus the AngloZionist Empire will re-take control of a FUBARed country the control of which it has been slowly but inexorably losing. I don't expect the elections to the Rada to change much to the new power configuration in the Ukraine.



Political debate Ucronazi style: in a stadium with folks in battle fatigues on the stage

It is high time now for Russia to pull the plug on this Ucronazi experiment in “russophobic independence”. That does not necessarily mean rejecting the outcome of the election, but it does mean that it is high time for Russia to recognize the two republics. I don't hold much hope for negotiations with Zelenskii because such negotiations are essentially negotiations with the Zelenskii's AngloZionist puppet masters with whom negotiations have been made impossible since early 2014. Simply put: there is no point in negotiating anything with anybody for Russia as long as there are no halfway “agreement capable” partners to negotiate with. As of now, I see no such partners. Hence, **Russia must embark on a policy of unilateral actions**. If the

5th columnists don't prevail, I expect that that is exactly what Russia will do from now on.

So who will win on Sunday? Will it be the Big Crook or the Little Crook?

Nobody know, but I can give a a firm prediction: it will be a crook.

The Saker

UPDATE April 21st, 00:30 UTC: Zelenskii won, by a landslide. Uber-loser Poroshenko even lost his last battle, as he did with all his battles. Let's see if he can stay out of jail next.

Zelenskii beat Poroshenko – what will happen next?

April 24, 2019



As everybody predicted, Poroshenko completely lost the election. As I wrote in my previous column, this is both amazing (considering Poro's immense and extensive resources and the fact that his opponent was, literally, a clown (ok, a comic if you prefer). His defeat was also so predictable as to be almost inevitable: not only is the man genuinely hated all over the Ukraine (except for the Nazi crackpots of the Lvov region), but he made fatal blunders which made him even more detestable than usual.

First, there was this masterpiece:



Translation: April 21st. A crucial choice!

Now one could sympathize with Poroshenko: not only did this “Putin the boogeyman” appear to work fantastically well with the main sponsors of the Ukronazi coup and with the legacy Ziomedia, but nobody dared to tell Poroshenko that most Ukrainians were not buying that nonsense at all. The suggestion that all the other candidates are Putin agents is no less ridiculous. The thin veneer of deniability Poroshenko had devised (the poster was not put up by the official Poroshenko campaign but by “volunteers”) failed, everybody immediately saw through it all, and this resulted in Poro’s first big campaign faceplant.

Next came this disaster:

<https://youtu.be/TYc63d9SvrM>



Again, this was not officially Poroshenko’s campaign which made this video, but everybody saw through this one too. The quasi-open threat to murder Zelenskii was received with horror in the Ukraine, and this PR-disaster was Poro’s second faceplant.

Then the poor man “lost it.” I won’t list all the stupid and ridiculous things the man said and did, but I will say that his performance at the much-anticipated debate in the stadium was a disaster too.

The writing had been on the wall for a while now, and this is why the two candidates were summoned to speak to their masters (face to face in Germany and France, by phone with Mr. MAGA) and they were told a few things:

- Poroshenko was told in no uncertain terms that he could not trigger a war, organize a last-minute false flag, murder Zelenskii or engage in any other “creative campaign methods.”
- Zelenskii was also clearly told that should he win the election, he was not to touch Poroshenko. It appears that [the USA gave personal security guarantees to Poroshenko](#).

The western calculus is simple: try to keep Poroshenko alive (figuratively and politically) and to see how much of the Rada he can keep. Furthermore, since Zelenskii yhgrnis extremely weak (he has no personal power base of any kind), Kolomoiskii will have him do exactly as he is told and Kolomoiskii can easily be told to behave by the Empire. Finally, there is Vladimir



Meet the new Ukie President (no, this is not a joke!)

Groisman, the current prime minister who has kept a very low profile, who does NOT have blood on his hands (at least when compared to thugs like Turchinov or Avakov) and who has not made any move which would blacklist him with the Kremlin. Groisman is also a Jew (Israel and the Ukraine are now the two countries on the planet in which both the President and the Prime-Minister are Jews; ironic considering the historical lovefest between Jews and Ukrainian nationalists ...). He might make a much more effective Ukrainian *Gauleiter* for the Empire than either Poroshenko or Zelenskii. For the time being, Goisman has already ditched Poroshenko’s party and is creating his own. And let’s not forget Avakov and Parubii, who are both soaked in innocent blood, and who will try to hold on to their considerable power by using the various Nazi death-squads under their control. Finally, there is still the formidable (and relatively popular) Iulia Timoshenko whose political ambitions need to be kept in check. Thus, Poroshenko with his immense wealth and his connections can still be a useful tool for the Empire’s control of the Ukraine.

The western calculus might also be wrong: for one thing, Zelenskii cannot deliver *anything* meaningful to the Ukrainian people, most definitely not prosperity or honesty. Pretty soon the Ukrainian people will wake up to realize that when they elected the “new face” of Zelenskii, they ended up with the “not new” face of Kolomoiskii and everything that infamous name entails. Zelenskii might not have

another option than to jail Poroshenko, which he semi-promised to do during the stadium debate. Except that now Zelenskii is saying that he will consult with Poroshenko and might even use him in some official capacity. Yes, campaign promises in the Ukraine are never kept for more than the time it takes to make them. Finally, Poroshenko's power base is very rapidly eroding because nobody wants to go down with him. I tend to believe that Poroshenko has outlived his usefulness for the AngloZionists because he became an overnight political corpse. But this is the Ukraine, so never say never.

Finally, the Empire is also pushing for a reform of the Ukrainian political system to give less powers to the President and more to the Rada. Again, this makes sense considering that Zelenskii is an unknown actor and considering the fact that Rada members are basically on the US payroll (across all parties and factions).

What about Russia in all this?

Well, the Russians have been extremely cautious, and nobody seems to harbor any illusions about Zelenskii. In fact, just a day after his election Zelenskii is already making all sorts of anti-Russian statements. Truly, besides the logical implication of Poroshenko's poster (that a defeat for him would mean a victory for Putin), nobody in Russia is celebrating. The main feeling about the entire topic of the Ukraine is one of total disgust, a gradual and painful realization of the fact that our so-called "brothers" are brothers only in the sense of the biblical Cain and the acceptance that there is nobody to talk to in Kiev. Thus Russia will have to embark on a policy of unilateral actions toward the Ukraine. These could include:



Maria Zakharova: only caution and skepticism for now

- Decide whether to recognize the outcome of the election or not. I think that it is more likely that Russia will recognize the fact that most Ukrainians did vote for Zelenskii, but that recognition will imply nothing more than that: the recognition of a fact.

- Accelerate the pace of distribution of Russian passports to citizens of the DNR and LNR republics.
- Slap further economic sanctions on the Ukraine (Russia has just banned the export of energy sources to the Ukraine – finally and at last!).
- Declare that since millions of Ukrainians did not vote (inside the Ukraine, in the DNR/LNR and in Russia, and since the Minsk Agreements are dead (they are *de facto* if not *de jure* yet) Russia does not recognize this election and, instead, recognizes the two people's republics. I don't think that the Kremlin will do that short of an Ukronazi attack on Novorussia (in which case the Russians will do what they did following Saakashvili's attack on South-Ossetia).

So far, Russian spokespeople have just said that they “respected the vote of the Ukrainian people” and that they will judge Zelenskii “on his actions, not his words”. This approach sure seems balanced and reasonable to me.

Conclusion:

The truth is that nobody knows what will happen next, not even Kolomoiskii or Zelenskii himself. There are just too many parameters to consider, and the real balance of power following this election has not manifested itself yet. As for the true aspirations and hopes of the people of the Ukraine, they were utterly ignored: Poroshenko will be replaced by Kolomoiskii, wearing the mask of Zelenskii. Hardly a reason to rejoice ...

In spite of the large number of electoral candidates, the people of the Ukraine were not given a meaningful choice. So they did the only thing they could do: they voted to kick Poroshenko out. And that sure must have felt great.

But will Zelenskii turn out to be any better? I very much doubt it, even though I also very much hope that I am wrong.

The Saker

Behold the breathtaking weakness of the Empire!

April 30, 2019

The Empire has suffered painful defeats in Afghanistan and Iraq, but one has to admit that these are “tough” countries to crack. The Empire also appears to have lost control of Libya, but that is another complex country which is very hard to control. We also saw all the pathetic huffing and puffing with the DPRK. But, let’s be honest, the USA never stood a chance to bully the DPRK into submission, nevermind invading or regime-changing it. Syria was much weaker, but here Russia, Iran and Hezbollah did a world class job of repelling all the AngloZionist attacks, political and military. Besides, I for one will never blame Trump for not listening to Bolton and not triggering WWII over Syria (yet?)

But Venezuela?!

No Hezbollah or Iran backing Maduro there. And Venezuela is way too far away from Russia to allow her to do what she did in Syria. In fact, Venezuela is in the proverbial “backyard” of the USA and is surrounded by hostile puppet regimes. And yet, tonight, it appears that the US puppet Guaidó has failed in his coup attempt.

Moon of Alabama did a great job covering the events of the day, so I will refer you to the excellent article “[Venezuela – Random Guyaidó’s New Coup Attempt Turns Out to Be A Dangerous Joke](#)“. I fully concur that today’s coup was both a joke and very dangerous.

Russian readers can also check out [this article by Vzgliad](#) which also gives a lot of interesting details, including the fact that Guaidó launched his coup from the Colombian Embassy in Caracas (see [here](#) for a machine translation).

But the thing which amazes me most tonight is the truly breathtakingly pathetic weakness of the clowns who launched this latest failed operation: Pompeo and Mr MAGA. Check them out:

Let’s begin with Pompeo.

According to him, the coup failed because of Russia (what else is new?! Not only that, but Maduro had already decided to run to Cuba, but then the Russians stopped him.

Really?

So are we to believe that the coup was a stunning success, yet another feather to the CIA's "hat" of failed successful covert operations? Apparently so.

After all, why would Maduro want to run unless he realized that the situation was hopeless?

But then "Russia" called him and told him to stay put. The conversation must have gone something like this:

Putin: *Mr Maduro – you don't need to worry about a thing. Just do what we tell you and stay put.*

Maduro: *but my people hate me! They all turned against me! The military is behind the coup!*

Putin: *no, no, it's all under control, just stay put.*

Maduro: *but the mob will lynch me if I stay!!!!*

Putin: *no worries, nobody will touch you.*

Does that dialog look credible to you? I sure hope not! I think that anybody with a modicum of intelligence ought to realize that Maduro's decision to stay in place could only have been based on one of two possible considerations:

1. The coup has failed and Maduro is safe or
2. The coup is successful and Maduro will stay and fight till his last breath (like Allende did)

But tonight Maduro is safe in Caracas and [the coup plotters are on the run](#).

The truth is that only a loser and imbecile like Pompeo could come up with such a lame excuse in a desperate attempt to "cover his ass" and blame his failure on the Neocon's favorite scapegoat: Russia.



Now let's check what his boss had to say:

Trump does not blame Russia. Instead, he blames Cuba!

I don't know what kind of silly scenarios Mr MAGA ran in his head to come up with "the Cubans did it" but that is even more ridiculous than "the Russians did it". Reading his "tweets" (how appropriate for this bird-brain!) one could get the impression that the Cubans launched a full-scale military attack (involving both the Cuban military and "militias") and that they orchestrated a brutal crack-down on the Venezuelan people.

In the real world, however, Cuba did nothing of the sort.

But, really, who cares?!

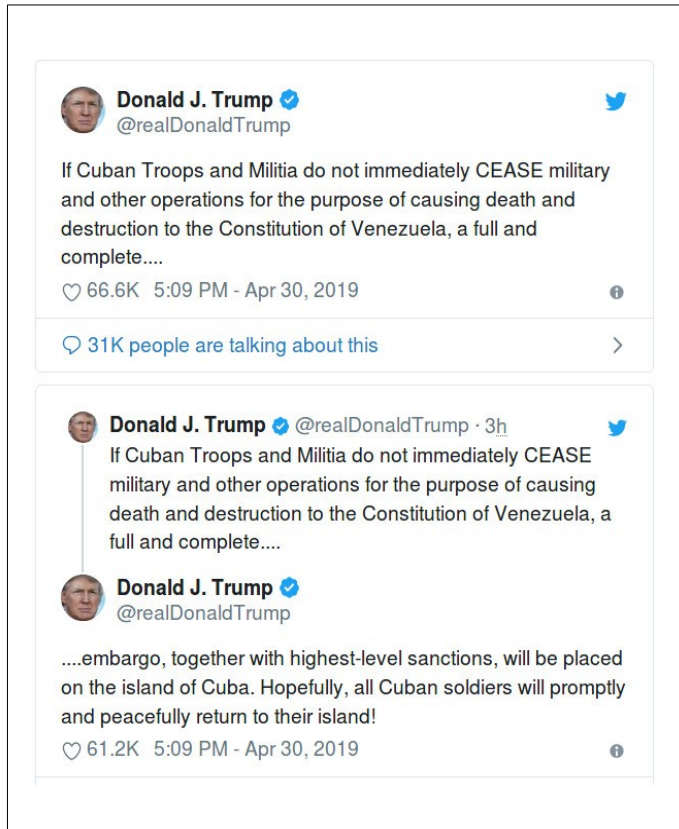
In the [Empire of Illusions](#) facts don't matter. At least to the leaders of the AngloZionist Empire who continue to believe that only spin matters.

In the case of Venezuela, spin alone failed.

So what's next?

According to the typical scenario revealed to us by [John Perkins](#), the next step should be a full-scale US invasion. And yes, he is right, that would be what the Empire would have done in its heyday. But nowadays?

Check out this interesting news snippet: [Eric Prince wants Blackwater to send 5,000 mercenaries to Venezuela](#) (does anybody know why and how these clowns came up



with the 5,000 figure? First Bolton, now Prince. Do they *really* think that this is enough?!).

The point is not whether Prince will ever get to send mercenaries to Venezuela or whether the Trump administration is inclined to accept this offer. The point is that Prince would have never made this offer in the first place if the US military was up to the task. It is not, and Prince knows that very well.

As for Maduro, he seems to have the support not only of a majority of his people, but of the Venezuelan armed forces. As for the armed forces, they are clearly enjoying the support of the people.

This is a very bad combination for the Empire. Here is why:

Yes, Venezuela has immense problems. And yes, both Chavez and Maduro have made mistakes. But this is not about Chavez or Maduro, this is about the rule of law inside and outside Venezuela. This is about the people of Venezuela, even the suffering ones, not willing to renounce the sovereignty of their country. Yes, Chavez did not solve all of Venezuela's problems, but to deliver the country to the Empire would mean crushing any hope of true, real, people power. The Venezuelan people apparently have no illusions about their Yankee neighbors and they don't want the Empire-style "democracy" to turn Venezuela into the next Libya.



The military stands by the Constitutional government of Venezuela

I should never say never, and God only knows what tomorrow (May 1st) will bring (Guaido has called for mass protests) but my gut feeling is that the Empire "injected" itself into Venezuela just enough to trigger an immune reaction, like a vaccine, but not enough to infect Venezuela with a toxin powerful enough to kill it.

In the meantime, US aircraft carriers are in the Mediterranean trying to scare Russia, Syria and Iran all at the same time. I can just imagine the disgusted contempt with which this latest sabre-rattling with outdated hardware is being received in Moscow, Damascus or Tehran. Even Hezbollah remains utterly unimpressed.

The truth is that the only people who have not come to the realization that the Empire is broken and defeated are the rulers of the Neocon deep state and those who still watch the legacy Ziomeida.

By now everybody else has realized how utterly impotent the Empire has become.

Conclusion:

The Empire only *appears* to be strong. In reality it is weak, confused, clueless and, most importantly, run by a sad gang of incompetent thugs who think that they can scare everybody into submission in spite of not having won a single significant war since 1945. The inability to break the will of the people of Venezuela is only the latest symptom of this mind-boggling weakness.

I will leave the last word to this charming lady who really said it all:



A week in the life of the Empire (UPDATED)

May 09, 2019

Introduction:

It is sometimes helpful not to look at any one specific issue in detail, but rather make a survey of ongoing processes instead. The resulting picture is neither better nor worse, it is simply different. This is what I want to do today: to take a bird's eye view of our suffering planet.

Putin trolls the Empire:

It is all really simple: if the Ukrainians will give passports to Russian citizens, and we in Russia will be handing out passports to the Ukrainians, then sooner or later we will reach the expected result: everybody will have the same citizenship. This is something which we have to welcome.

Vladimir Putin

It appears that the Kremlin is very slowly changing its approach to the Ukrainian issue and is now relying more on unilateral actions. The first two measures taken by the Russians are maybe not “too little too late”, but certainly “just the bare minimum and at that, rather late”. Still, I can only salute the Kremlin's newly found determination. Specifically, the Kremlin has banned the export of energy products to the Ukraine (special exemptions can still be granted on a case by case basis) and the Russians have decided to distribute Russian passports to the people of Novorussia. Good.

Zelenskii's reaction to this decision came as the first clear sign that the poor man has no idea what he is doing and no plan as to how to deal with the Russians. He decided to crack a joke, (which he is reportedly good at), and declare that the Ukrainian passport was much better than the Russian one and that the Ukraine will start delivering Ukrainian passports to Russian citizens. Putin immediately replied with one of his typical comebacks declaring that he supports Zelenskii and that he looks forward to the day when Russians and Ukrainians will have the same citizenship again. Zelenskii had nothing to say to that :-)

Zelenskii finally finds something in common with Russia and the Ukraine

I have been thinking long about this “a lot in common” between Ukraine and Russia. The reality is that today, after the annexation of the Crimea and the aggression in the Donbas, of the “common” things we have only one thing left – this is the state border. And control of every inch on the Ukrainian side, must be returned by Russia. Only then will we be able to continue the search for [things in] “common”

Vladimir Zelenskii

Well, almost. He did eventually make a Facebook post in which he declared that all that Russia and the Ukraine had in common was a border. This instantly made him the object of jokes and memes, since all Russians or Ukrainians know that Russia and the Ukraine have many old bonds which even 5 years of a vicious civil war and 5 years of hysterically anti-Russian propaganda could not sever. They range from having close relatives in the other country, to numerous trade and commercial transactions, to a common language. The closest thing to a real Ukrainian language would be the Surzhik which is roughly 50/50 in terms of vocabulary and whose pronunciation is closer to the south Russian one than to the Zapadenskii regional dialect spoken in the western Ukraine and which is used (and currently imposed) by the Ukronazi junta in Kiev.

The malignant manatee threatens the planet with fire and brimstone

We have Pompeo, a malignant manatee looking to start wars in which he will not risk his flabby amorphous ass, also parading his Christianity. Bolton, a mean sonofabitch who belongs in a strait jacket, at least doesn't pose as someone having a soul. And the Golden Tufted Cockatoo, too weak to control those around him, preening and tweeting. God save us.

Fred Reed

The term “malignant manatee” is not from me; the brilliant Fred Reed came up with this one, but I can only fully endorse it because it fits. Perfectly. And our malignant manatee sure is on a roll! Just this week he managed to threaten [Venezuela](#), [Iran](#), and [even Russia and China together](#). I think that it is high time to declare that Pompeo is a *bona fide* nutcase, a dangerous, arrogant and ignorant psychopath whose crazy statements represent a direct threat to the entire planet. Not to say that his pal Bolton is any less crazy. Now combine these two rabid thugs with the spineless “Golden Tufted Cockatoo” (to use Fred Reed’s equally hilarious but accurate characterization) and you see that the planet is in big, big trouble.

Turns out that Putin is a crypto-Zionist and an Israeli puppet.

Here I won’t even bother with any quotes. The alternative Internet/blogosphere has, again, been hit by a wave of articles declaring that Putin is Netanyahu’s puppet and a crypto-Zionist. I have debunked that



Putin with his Jewish buddies

nonsense in the past (see [here](#) and [here](#)) and I won’t repeat it all here. Besides, what this surge in “Putin the Zionist” propoganda is, is not so much the result of a gradual realization about the true agenda or Putin himself as much as it is, yet again, a desperate scramble for clicks. I already discussed that recently too (see [here](#)). I will just reiterate my conclusion here: **clickbaiters are never experts and experts are never clickbaiters.**

Frankly, to all those who email me and ask “Is it really true? Putin is an Israeli puppet? He helps Netanyahu in Syria, does he not?!” I would suggest simply looking at what the Israelis and



Putin with his Muslim buddies

Zionists write about Putin (for starters, you can click [here](#), [here](#) or [here](#)). Even better, ask the defenders of *Putin the crypto-Zionist* to explain the hysterically anti-Putin campaign the US legacy Ziomeia has been engaged in for the past years! But don’t hold your breath for an answer – since Russia has comprehensively foiled **all** Israel’s

many plans for Syria, it takes a remarkable determination **not** to see that Putin is hated by Neocons and Zionists alike, and for good cause I would add.

Oh, and Putin is a crypto-Muslim too!

Yes, besides being a crypto-Zionist, Putin is also a crypto-Muslim. This latest nonsense usually comes from Alt-Right circles who can forgive Putin his friendliness to Israel, but not to Islam. These are the folks who believe that Putin is not a real defender of the “White Race”. They are opposed by those who believe that Putin and the Moscow Patriarchate will somehow jump-start the “Christian West”. We are talking about some hardcore “single-issue” folks here whose main disagreement is whether Jews or Muslims are to be hated (and feared!) most.

[Having had to deal with both groups myself – I have been accused of being a Jew, a Jew lover and a Muslim and a Muslim lover many times! – I know that reasoning with these folks is a total waste of time. Their paranoid hatred is completely incompatible with any fact-based and logical discussion. Besides, by arguing with them you threaten their income and livelihood – which due to their lack of expertise depends entirely on their ability to generate clickbait revenue. If you do engage with them, they will call you a Jew-lover or an Islam-lover and that’s it. Not worth your time IMHO].

The quasi-comical truth is that the Alt-Righters don’t get Russia *at all*. They keep transposing their narrow horizons on a nation with which they have absolutely nothing in common, not even religiously or racially (even if they think otherwise). Hence their love-hate relationship with Putin: on one hand, they would love to have a champion like Putin (Ann Coulter or Milo Yiannopoulos do not qualify), but on the other, they hate Putin for not endorsing their racist and fascist agenda. Truth be told: Russia has no use for these intellectual midgets.

Russia is “selling out” to the Taliban?

Well, since we are making a (tongue-in-cheek) “inventory” of all of Putin’s (and even Russia’s) sins, let’s include cozying up to the Taliban (who even agreed to put on Saint George’s Ribbons!) and... .. and what exactly is happening here?



The Russian Ambassador to Kabul with his Taliban buddies

How about trying to bring peace back to Afghanistan? You know – the same thing Russia is doing in Venezuela, in Syria and elsewhere. This implies talking to the other side, and even striking smiling poses when asked by the press.

Needless to say, the thugs running the AngloZionst Empire have accused Russia or aiding and even [arming the Taliban](#). And why not? This is no more ridiculous than saying that Saddam and Iran are helping al-Qaeda, or than saying that Russia “hacked” DNC computers, or told Maduro not to run for his life. Hey! We are living in “Skripal times” and the rules of evidence have changed to “highly likely” – so why not claim that Russia is also selling out to the Taliban (maybe even on Netanyahu’s orders?).

In the meantime, Russian soldiers are busy ducking missiles...

Yep, apparently unaware that their Commander-in-Chief is a puppet of both Israel and the worldwide Islamic *Ummah*, Russian servicemen are ducking missiles in Syria. The latest attack saw them [shoot 36 missiles \(and one targeting drone\) out of the sky](#). This is good news, of course, but this just goes to show that these (US and Israel backed) Islamists shooting these missiles have not been informed that the Russian military in Syria is here to help Netanyahu and Trump. Somebody should probably tell them ;-)

Conclusion: just one more crazy and terrifying week, with many more to come

I tried to be a little tongue-in-cheek here, but the reality is that what is taking place before our eyes is both absolutely insane and most terrifying. Why? Because the world is now ruled by a most dangerous gang of ignorant thugs who are very rapidly losing their grip on our planet and who are simply neither intellectually equipped to understand, nor deal with this very complex and rapidly changing situation.

What we are seeing is a full-spectrum collapse of the unipolar world and its gradual, but also inexorable, replacement with a multi-polar world in which things



like “speaking with your adversaries or even enemies” becomes the norm rather than the exception. Even more importantly, this is a world in which US threats always fall on deaf ears simply because nobody takes the US seriously anymore. While the US military probably has the capability to re-invade Grenada or “bring democracy” to the inhabitants of the North Sentinel Island – no adults in the room will be impressed (least of all the Iranians!).

It is this quiet indifference which enrages the likes of Pompeo, Bolton or Trump – for all their narcissistic chest-thumping – they are, and will forever remain, the ultimate losers – folks who simply couldn’t get *anything* done. Even more terrifying is their sense of total impunity. If Obama was “democracy with a human face” then Trump is “democracy with a simian face” – not much better.

When I think that a “*Golden Tufted Cockatoo*” (to use Fred Reeds wonderful image) has the authority to press the nuclear button I feel terrified. I also realize that the survival of the human species will depend on Putin and Xi and their ability to gradually disarm or neutralize the US threat *without* triggering a nuclear war.

These are truly terrifying times. If you are not terrified, then you are delusional.

But if being terrified is a natural and absolutely normal reaction, we need to overcome it and fearlessly resist. Like Maduro does, surrounded by his men.



This refusal to be afraid, even while being terrified, is how we will eventually defeat the Empire!

Venezuela is, by far, the weakest link in the chain of resistance to the Empire. But look at these faces! All I can say is this: may the courage of the kids protecting not only Maduro, but also the sovereignty of their country, be an inspiration to us all, no matter how terrified we are.

The Saker

UPDATE: turns out that it was not Russia or Cuba which are responsible for the failed coup. According to Neocon US Senator from Florida, Venezuela regime change crusader Marco Rubio, it's the Chinese! I wonder whom the US leaders are going to blame next? Any guesses?

The AngloZionist Empire: a hyperpower with microbrains and no cred left

May 16, 2019

Last week saw what was supposed to be a [hyperpower](#) point fingers for its embarrassing defeat not only at Venezuela, which [successfully defeated Uncle Shmuel's coup plans](#), but also at a list of other countries [including Cuba, Russia, China and Iran](#). It's is rather pathetic and, frankly, bordering on the comically ridiculous.

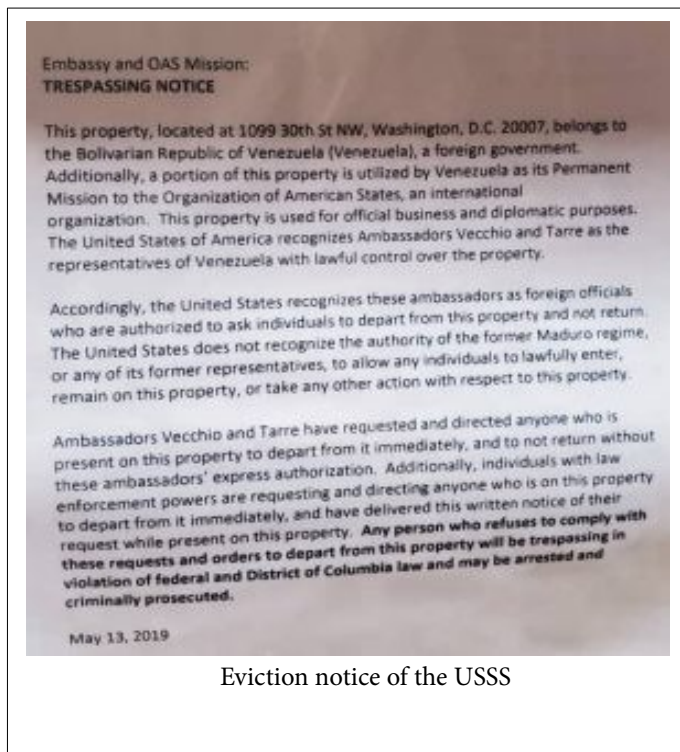
Uncle Shmuel clearly did not appreciate being the laughingstock of the planet.

And as Uncle Shmuel always does, he decided to flex some muscle and show the world “who is boss” by...

... [blockading the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC](#).

But even that was too much for the MAGA Admin, so they also denied doing so (how lame is that!?)

Which did not prevent [US activists of entering the embassy \(legally, they were invited in and confirm it all\)](#).



Eviction notice of the USSS

Now the US Secret Service wants to evict the people inside the building.

So much for the CIA's beloved “plausible deniability” which now has morphed into “comical deniability”.

If you think that all this sounds incredibly amateurish and stupid – you are 100% correct.

In the [wonderful words of Sergei Lavrov](#), the US diplomats have “*lost the taste for diplomacy*”.

But that was not all.

In an act of incredible courage, the USA, which was told ([by the Israelis](#), of course!) that the Iranians were about to attack “somewhere”, Uncle Shmuel sent two aircraft carrier strike groups to the Middle-East. In a “daring” operation, the brilliant [USAF pilots B-52 bombers over the Persian Gulf fly first mission](#) to “send a message” to the “Mollahs”: don’t f*ck with us or else...

The “Mollahs” apparently were unimpressed as they simply declared that “[the US carriers were not a threat, only a target](#)”.

The AngloZionists apparently [have also executed a false flag operation](#) to get a pretext to strike Iran, but so far this seems to have gotten rather little traction in the region (so far – this might change).

Now let’s leave this “Kindergarten level of operations” and try to make some sense from this nonsense.

First, while the Americans can pour scorn on the Iranians, call them ragheads, terrorists, Mollahs, sand-niggers or confuse them with Iraqis or even think that Iranians are Arabs (as, apparently, are the Turks, at least by the US common standard of ignorance), but the truth is that the Iranians



Lavrov reacting to the latest US threats

are world-class and most sophisticated players, especially their **superb** analytical community. They fully understand that a B-52 anywhere near the Iranian airspace is a sitting duck and that if the Americans were planning to strike Iran, they would pull their aircraft carrier far away from any possible Iranian strikes. As for the B-52, they have long range cruise missiles and they don’t need to get near Iran to deliver their payloads.

In fact, I think that the proper way to really make the Iranians believe that Uncle Shmuel means business would be to flush any and all US ships out of the Persian Gulf, to position the B-52s in Diego Garcia and to place the carriers as far away as possible

to still be able to support a missile/bomb attack on Iranian targets. And you can bet that the Iranians keep very close tabs on exactly what CENTCOM aircraft are deployed and where. To attack Iran the US would need to achieve a specific concentration of forces and support elements which are all trackable by the Iranians. My guess is that the Iranians already have a full list of all CENTCOM officers down to the colonel level (and possibly even lower for airmen) and that they already know exactly which individual USAF/USN aircraft are ready to strike. One could be excused to think that this is difficult to do, but in reality it is not. I have personally seen it done.

Second, the Americans know that the Iranians know that (well, maybe not Mr MAGA, but folks at the DIA, ONI, NSA, etc. do know that). So all this sabre-rattling is designed to show that Mr MAGA has tons of hair on his chest; it's all for internal US consumption. As for the Iranians, they have already heard any and all imaginable US threats. They have been attacked many times by both the USA and Israel (directly or by proxy), and they have been preparing for a US attack ever since the glorious days of [Operation Eagle Claw](#); they are as ready as they can be, you can take that to the bank. Finally, the terrorist attack by the USN on a [civilian Iranian airliner](#) certainly convinced the Iranians that the leaders of the AngloZionist Empire lack even basic decency, nevermind honor. Nevermind the use of chemical warfare by Iraq against Iran with chemicals helpfully provided by various US and EU companies (with the full blessing of their governments). No – the Iranians truly have no illusions whatsoever about what the [Shaytân-e Bozorg](#) is capable of in his rage.

Third, “attacking embassies” is a glaring admission of terminal weakness. That was true for the seizure of Russian consular buildings, and this is true for the Venezuelan embassy. In the real (supra-Kindergarten) world when country A has a beef with country B, it does not vent its frustration against its embassy. Such actions are not only an admission of weakness, but also a sign of a fundamental lack of civilization.

[Sidebar: this issue is crucial to the understanding of the United States. The US is an extremely developed country, but not a civilized one. Oscar Wilde (and George Clemenceau) had it right: “America is the only country that went from barbarism to decadence without civilization in between“. There are signs of that everywhere in the USA: from the feudal labor laws, to the lack of universal healthcare, to absolutely ridiculous mandatory criminal sentences (the [Soviet Penal Code under Stalin](#) was MUCH more reasonable

*and civilized than the current US laws!), to the death penalty, to the socially accepted torture in GITMO and elsewhere, to racial tensions, the disgusting “food” constituting the typical “[SAD](#)” diet, to the completely barbaric “war on drugs”, to the world record of incarcerations, to an immense epidemic of sexual assaults and rapes ([1/5 of all women in the USA!](#)), homosexuality accepted as a “[normal and positive variation of human sexuality](#)“, [98 percent of men reported internet porn use in the last six months](#), ... – you can continue that list ad nauseam. Please don’t misunderstand me – there are as many kind, intelligent, decent, honorable, educated, compassionate people in the USA as anywhere else. This is not about the people living in the USA: it is about **the kind of society** these people are living in. In fact, I would argue the truism that US Americans are the first victims of the lack of civilization of their own society! Finally, a lack of civilization is not always a bad thing, and sometimes it can make a society much more dynamic, more flexible, more innovative too. But yeah, mostly it sucks...]*

By the way, the USA is hardly unique in having had degenerate imbeciles in power. Does anybody remember what Chernenko looked like when he became the Secretary General of the CPSU? What about folks like [Jean-Bédél Bokassa](#) or Mikheil Saakashvili (this latter case is especially distressing since it happened in a country with a truly ancient and extremely rich culture!). And while we can dislike folks like George Bush Senior or James Baker – these were superbly educated and extremely intelligent people. Compare them to such psychopathic ignoramuses like Pompeo, Bolton or Trump himself!

So this latest US “attack” on the Venezuela is truly a most telling symptom of the wholesale collapse of US power and of the moral and intellectual bankruptcy and lack of civilization of the Neocon ruling elites.

The big question is obvious: will they attack Venezuela or Iran next?

[In the very first article I ever wrote for my blog](#), as far back as 2007, I predicted that the US would attack Iran. I still believe that the Israelis will never cease to try to get the US to do their dirty work for them (and let the *goyim* pay the price!). What I am



NYT’s so-called “[anti-Semitic](#)” cartoon.
Pretty accurate if you ask me!

not sure about is whether the Israelis truly will have the power to push the USA into such a suicidal war (remember, if Iran cannot “win” against the USA, neither can the USA “win” against Iran – thus Iran will win simply by surviving and not caving in – which they will and they won’t). The good news is that US power has been in sharp (and accelerating!) decline at least since Clinton and his gang. I would even add that the last two idiots (Obama and Trump) did more damage to the US power than all their predecessors combined. The bad news is that the collective IQ of US leaders has been falling even faster than US power. We can hope that the first will hit zero long before the second, but there is no guarantee.

Truly, nobody knows if the US will or will not attack Iran and/or Venezuela next. The Neocons sure want that, but whether they will make it happen this time around or not depends on so many variables that even the folks in the White House and the Pentagon probably don’t really know what will happen next.

What is certain is that the US reputation worldwide is basically roadkill. The fact that most folks inside the USA are never told about that does not make it less real. The Obama-Trump tag team has truly inflicted irreparable damage on the reputation of the USA (in both cases because they were hopelessly infected and corrupted by the Neocons). The current US leaders appear to understand that, at least to some degree, this is why they are mostly lashing out at “easy” targets like free speech (on the Internet and [elsewhere](#)), Assange, the Venezuelan Embassy, etc. The real danger comes from either one of two factors:

1. The Neocons will feel humiliated by the fact that all their threats are only met with indifference, disgust or laughter
2. The Neocons will feel buoyed by the fact that nothing terrible happened (so far) when they attacked a defenseless target



2006: The people of Lebanon celebrate the victory which turned the tide of AngloZionist imperialism

Either way, in both cases the outcome is the same: each “click!” brings us closer to the inevitable “bang!”.

By the way, I think I should also mention here that the current state of advanced paranoia in which the likes of Pompeo point their fingers left and right are also signs of terminal weakness: these are not so much ways to credibly explain the constant and systematic failures of the Israelis and the Americans to get anything actually done as they are a way to distract away from the real reasons for the current extreme weakness of the AngloZionists.

I concluded my last article by speaking of the terrified Venezuelans who refused to be afraid. I will conclude this one by pointing at the first instance when a (comparatively) small adversary completely refused to be frightened even while it was the object of a truly terrifying attack: Hezbollah in 2006. Even though they were outnumbered, outgunned and surrounded by the Israelis, the members of the Resistance in Lebanon simply refused to be afraid and, having lost the fear to which so many Arabs did succumb before 2006, they proceeded to give the Israelis (fully backed by the USA) the worst and most humiliating thrashing in their country’s (admittedly short) history.

I urge you to read al-Sayyid Hassan’s famous “Divine Victory” speech (you can still find the English language transcript [here](#) and [here](#)) – it is one of the most important speeches of the 20th century! – and pay attention to these words (emphasis added):

*“We feel that we won; Lebanon won; Palestine won; the Arab nation won, and **every oppressed, aggrieved person in this world also won**. Our victory is not the victory of a party. I repeat what I said in Bint Jubayl on 25 May 2000: It is not the victory of a party or a community; rather it is a victory for true Lebanon, the true Lebanese people, and **every free person in the world**. Don’t distort this big historic victory. Do not contain it in party, sectarian, communal, or regional cans. This victory is too big to be comprehended by us. The next weeks, months, and years will confirm this.”*

And, indeed, the next weeks, months and years have very much confirmed that!

Any US attack on Iran will have pretty similar results, but on a much, much bigger scale.

And the Iranians know that. As do many in the Pentagon (the CIA and the White House are probably beyond hopeless by now).

Conclusion: good news and bad news

The good news first: Pompeo and Lavrov had what seems to be a meaningful dialog. That is very, very good, even if totally insufficient. They have also announced that they want to create study groups to improve the (currently dismal) relations between the two countries. That is even better news (if that really happens). Listening to Pompeo and Lavrov, I got a feeling that the Americans are slowly coming to the realization that they have an overwhelming need to re-establish a meaningful dialog with the other nuclear superpower. Good. But there is also bad news.



Finally some meaningful discussions between the two nuclear superpowers!

The rumor that the strategic geniuses surrounding Trump are now considering sending 120,000 troops to the Middle-East is really very bad news. If this just stays a rumor, then it will be the usual hot air out of DC, along the lines of Trump's "very powerful armada" sent to scare the DPRK (it failed). The difference here is simple: sending carriers to the Middle-East is pure PR. But sending carriers AND 120,000 troops completely changes that and now this threat, if executed, will become very real. No, I don't think that the US will attempt to invade Iran, but 120,000 is pretty close to what would be needed to try to re-open the Strait of Hormuz (assuming the Iranians close it) while protecting all the (pretty much defenseless) CENTCOM facilities and forces in the region. Under this scenario, the trip of Pompeo to Russia might have a much more ominous reason: to explain to the Russians what the US is up to and to provide security guarantees that this entire operation is not aimed at Russian forces. IF the US really plans to attack Iran, then it would make perfect sense for Pompeo to talk to Lavrov and open channels of communications between the two militaries to agree on "deconfliction" procedures. Regardless of whether the Russians accept such deconfliction measures or not (my guess is that they definitely would), such a trip is a "must" when deploying large forces so near to Russian military forces.

So far Trump has [denied this report](#) – but we all know that he suffers from the "John Kerry syndrome": he wants better relations with Russia only until the Neocons

tell him not to. Then he makes a 180 and declares the polar opposite of what he just said.

Still, there are now [rumors that Trump is getting fed up with Bolton](#) (who, truth be told, totally FUBARed the Venezuelan situation!).

As for the Iraqis, [they have already told the US to forget using Iraqi territory for any attack](#). This reminds me of how the Brazilians told the US that Brazil would not allow its territory to be used for any attacks. This is becoming a pattern. Good.

Frankly, while an AngloZionist attack on Iran is always and by definition possible, I can't imagine the folks at the Pentagon having the stomach for that. In a recent article Eric Margolis outlined what the rationale for such an attack might be (check out his full article [here](#)). Notice this sentence: "*The Pentagon's original plan to punish Iran called for some 2,300 air strikes on Day 1 alone*". Can they really do that? Yes, absolutely. But imagine the consequences! Margolis speaks of "punishing" Iran. 2,300 Air strikes in one day is not something I would call a "punishment". That is a full scale attack on Iran which, in turn, means that the Iranians will have exactly *ZERO* reasons to hold back in any way. If the AngloZionists attack Iran with 2,300 air strikes on Day 1, then you can be sure that on Day 2 all hell will break loose all over the Middle-East and the AngloZionists will have absolutely *NO* means of stopping it.

This will be a real bloodbath and nobody will have any idea as to how to stop it.

And you can be darn sure that the Iranians will show much more staying power than the imperialists, if only because they will be fighting in defense of their country, their faith, their liberty, their friends and their families. To expect the Iranians to cave in or surrender in any way would be the most stupid notion anybody could entertain.

Could they really be THAT stupid in Washington DC?

I don't know.

But what I do know is this: any such attack will be extremely costly and very, very dangerous. Obviously, the Neocons don't give a rats ass about costs, financial or human. They just want war, war, war and more war (remember [McCain's](#) "*bomb, bomb, bomb – bomb, bomb Iran*"?). But the Neocons are only a tiny fraction of the US ruling elites (even if the most powerful one) and my hope is that the sane elements will prevail (which, indeed, they have so far).

As for right now, we are still okay. But if the US actually start sending large forces to the Middle-East, then all bets are off.

The Saker

Prospects for the emergence of a real opposition in Russia

May 29, 2019

As predicted, Putin's popularity takes a nosedive.

This fact is not often discussed in the West, but the popularity of Vladimir Putin is in decline and has been so ever since, following his reelection, he kept more or less the same (already unpopular) government while that government very clumsily attempted to “sneak by” a pension reform undetected. Now [the latest numbers are in](#), and they are not good: only 31.7% of Russians trust Vladimir Putin, that is his worst score in 13 years! His score last year was 47.4% (by the way, Shoigu got only 14.8%, Lavrov got 13%, and Medvedev got 7.6%. These are terrible scores by any measure!)

I have been warning about this for a while now (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)), and we now can try to understand what happened.

First, it is obvious that millions of Russians (including yours truly) were deeply disappointed that Putin did not substantially reorganize the Russian government following his triumphant reelection last year. Putin himself is on record saying two things about that: first, that he is generally happy with the performance of the government and, second, that he needs an experienced team to implement his very ambitious reform program (more about that in a moment).



These are the faces most Russians are fed-up with

Second, it is equally obvious that the pension reform is profoundly unpopular and that Putin's personal credibility has never recovered from this political fiasco.

Third, and this is the most overlooked and yet most interesting development – there is a *real* opposition gradually emerging in Russia. What do I mean by “real”? First, I mean not a “pretend opposition” as we see in the Russian Duma (which is a glorified rubber-stamping parliament). Second, I mean a *patriotic* opposition which is neither financed nor controlled by Mr. Soros or the CIA or any of their innumerable

offshoots. The problem is that this opposition has many severe problems and that it completely fails to present an alternative to the current “Putinocracy.”

Here we need to state something significant: Putin is indeed a “liberal,” at least in terms of economic policies. When he says that he is happy (“on the whole”) with the performance of the Medvedev government, it is because he probably is. Furthermore, while Putin apparently likes to listen to folks like Glaziev, he is clearly wary of implementing the more “social” (or even “socialist”) measures advocated by Glaziev and his supporters.

But if Putin is a liberal, is there really a 5th column acting behind the scenes?

This being said, it would be wrong to jump to the primitive conclusion that there is no 5th column (or no “Atlantic Integrationists”) in the Kremlin or in the [Staraya Square](#). In fact, it would be impossible for such a 5th column not to exist. How do we know that? For three very basic reasons

- The AngloZionist leaders of the Empire absolutely *hate* Putin. Those pretending to deny that are either terminally dishonest or fantastically stupid. Either way, they are wrong. Simply put: by the late 1990s Russia as a country was quasi-dead, finished, something like the Ukronazi occupied Ukraine today. Not only has Putin single-handedly saved Russia from collapse, he turned Russia into a power capable of defeating the plans of the Empire not only in Syria but also in the rest of the Middle-East. Yes, all the accusations of “collusion” and “hacking” are verbal [prolefeed](#) for TV-watching intellectual midgets, but that does not mean that the leaders don’t have real, factual and logical reasons to fear Putin and Russia. They do. And they are doing everything in their power to weaken Russia and overthrow Putin.
- Most of the Russian elites achieved their elite status in the 1990s (some even in the 1980s!), and many of them hate Putin for putting a stop to the total robbery bonanza which made it possible for these people to not only come to power but also make a killing financially. As for the so-called “economic block” of the Russian government, it is entirely made up of what I loosely call the “WTO/IMF/WB/etc.” -Types: folks who sincerely endorse the so-called “[Washington Consensus](#).” The very *least* one could say about these folks is that their worldview and ideology are not only totally alien to traditional

Russian values, they are in fact **profoundly anti-Russian**. For these folks to become the 5th column is the most natural development.

- The system which Putin inherited was one deeply integrated with the AngloZionist sphere of financial, economic, political, and social influence. While western sanctions (and general political shortsightedness) severed many of these ties (thank you to the Neocons for their life-saving sanctions and, especially, hysterically Russophobic propaganda!), there are very few cases (if any) of Russians severing such ties. Some believe that Putin sincerely wanted Russia to join NATO or/and the EU. I don't agree with that, but whether he was sincere or not, the fact is that Putin did initially try to court the West. The fact that the West was too stupid to see the fantastic opportunity this situation was offering is yet another powerful testimony of how incompetent western "area specialists" have become.

Putin's 2007 "[Munich speech](#)" should have acted like an urgent wake-up call to the leaders of the West, but they lacked the brains and courage to listen to what Putin was saying. The same thing happened during [Putin's 2015 speech at the UNGA](#). To his internal Russian audience, Putin bluntly said, when asked if the West was trying to "humiliate" Russia: "*They do not want to humiliate us, they want to subdue us, solve their problems at our expense.*" Personally, I believe that Putin, as any other officer of the First Main Directorate (foreign intelligence) of the KGB always understood that the West was a mortal enemy of Russia and that this has been true for at least 1000 years. Thus I think that it would be naive to believe that Putin ever "trusted" the West. But did he deliberately give that impression for as long as it could serve his purposes? Yes, absolutely. Now, this period is clearly over.

The one thing which the Russian 5th column cannot really be is any type of "opposition." First, the 5th column is **internal** to the Kremlin, to the Presidential Administration, to the "United Russia" party and to all the other centers of power in Russia. This forces the opposition to **pretend** loyalty to Putin while sabotaging every effort at re-sovereignizing Russia (admittedly a tough task since Russia has been ruled by foreign elites since at least the times of Peter I).

[Sidebar: I am often asked why Russia Today and Sputnik publish what can only be called "trash" or even anti-religious propaganda on their websites. The answer is simple: there are plenty of folks at RT and Sputnik (especially in the teams operating their websites as opposed to the actual broadcasts)

who are pure products of the AngloZionist worldview and who love some sleazy sex story almost as much as they love to bash or ridicule the Orthodox church. While there are plenty of terrific people in both of these media, there are also plenty who secretly would love Russia to return to the 1990s or become a kind of “Poland” east of the Ukraine. This is also why these outlets make a strenuous effort not to discuss the Israel lobby in the West (not only the USA), but they also stay away from any discussion of 9/11. I know for a fact that any mention of the real events of 9/11 is strictly forbidden by some “bigshot” editors in Moscow as my own interviews were censored that way.]

One word of caution here: there are millions of Russians abroad, and many of them are what are now called “**вырусь**” (vy-roos’) in Russia: folks who might speak Russian, and even visit Russia from time to time, but who have completely lost their “Russian-ness” and whose worldview does not extend beyond wishing that Russia was more like the USA or Germany. They think of Russia as “rashka,” and they absolutely hate any genuine manifestation of Russian culture, spirituality, traditions or religion. Some of them will join the Alt-Right movement and pretend that the racist categories and ideology used by this movement have some traction in Russia (they don’t). Some will try to impersonate Orthodox Christians. In truth – they are still a pure product of the AngloZionst Empire. Some of them have clearly found gainful employment in the Russian media where they keep a vigilant watch for any signs that the ideological dogma of the West (we all know what they are) are being debunked by Russian patriots. These “vyroos” are yet another manifestation of the Russian 5th column.

What about the official opposition to Putin?

Then there is the “official” Duma opposition, which is more or less a joke. Some Russian MPs are better than others, but even the comparatively better ones are entirely unable to present a real challenge to the Russian government (we saw that painfully illustrated by the Duma vote on the pension reform).

As for the ordinary people, most of them probably still trust Putin in foreign policy issues, but many are also getting genuinely



Ukie Defense Minister Poltorak photoshops himself before an exploding Kremlin tower. The kind of nonsense which gets even Duma members angry

fed-up with an arrogant and condescending ruling elite which couldn't care less about the plight of regular people and who live in an ivory tower of wealth, arrogance and power.

There is also a gradual realization that Putin in generally being "too soft" on the Empire and not proactive enough in defense of Novorussia against the Ukronazi junta in Kiev. Sadly, I have to agree with them. Yes, there has been some progress: the Russian ban on exporting energy to the Ukraine and the deliverance of Russian passports to the people of Novorussia. Furthermore, the Kremlin has expressed precisely *zero* approval of Zelenskii's election and, apparently, this was the correct move since even though the policies of Poroshenko were categorically rejected by an absolute majority of the Ukrainian people, all the signs are that Zelenskii has already wholly caved to the demands of the "collective West". Unless this trend towards "more of the same, only worse" is reversed, it is likely that the popular pressure in Russia to be far more proactive against the regime in Kiev will only increase. In recent months the Duma has been under pressure from the public to take a more forceful reaction to the events in the Ukraine, and this has had some, albeit limited, effect: the totally lame Duma has now become a little bit less lame, but not by much.

So what is this new opposition to Putin?

The distinguishing characteristic of this new opposition to Putin is that it sees itself as the truly patriotic segment of Russian society. These are folks who blame Putin for being weak, indecisive and corrupt (including personally). They believe that Putin sits on the top of an oligarchic pyramid which only pays lip service to Russian national interests, but which in reality is interested only in wealth, power and influence. Frankly, much of their argumentation about Putin's alleged corruption is based on a mix of disinformation and personal hatred for Putin himself. In contrast, however, their arguments that Putin is too weak or indecisive are based on a completely rational and fact based analysis of the events which have marked Putin's presidency. After all, the man has been in power for 20 years or so, he has enjoyed tremendous bureaucratic power and the full support of the vast majority of the population. How then can he (or his supporters) blame it all on a "bad system" or the power of a 5th column whose existence some don't believe in in the first place?

On the right is a typical opposition "Internet poster".

While I personally don't agree with this point of view, I have to recognize that it is not self-evidently absurd or solely based on propaganda. In other words, they do have a point, and much of their criticism is valid.

Alas, much of it is not, and that mix loses a lot in credibility when 50% of it is fact-based and logical, and 50% is not.

What is even worse is that these patriots regularly find themselves in the same camp as the Soros/CIA -funded folks who the patriots claim to hate, but whose arguments they often recycle (about the personal corruption of Putin, for example).

The other major weakness of this new opposition is that it lacks any kind of leader. This is why I did not bother listing the names of the main representatives of this opposition: for most of those who will read this article, these names will mean nothing.

Finally, this new patriotic opposition seems to lack an original worldview: much of their argumentation boils down to "it was better in the Soviet era" (they typically tend to overlook how bad things indeed were, at least since the 1980s!).

So where do we go from here? Will Russia ever have a real, vibrant, opposition?

My short personal answer is, yes, Russia will have such an opposition. Here is why:

- The official Duma opposition is both useless and hopeless.
- The Soros/CIA financed opposition is discredited beyond rescue.
- The 5th column is fundamentally a fraud, and most Russians hate it.
- The current "patriotic" opposition will grow due to the policies of the Russian government, and they will probably learn from their mistakes.



- Crises often (almost always) generate the appearance of new leaders

I hope that the newly emerging “patriotic” opposition will focus its wrath, not on Putin as a person, but on the mistakes of the Russian government wherever they happen: President, Prime Minister, Minister or below – it should not matter. If the opposition succeeds in focusing on issues rather than venting its rage against specific individuals, then real changes become possible, including personnel changes.

The latest opinion polls show that **all** the members of the government are suffering from falling ratings, not just the Atlantic Integrationists. If this trend maintains itself, the Eurasian Sovereignists will have a powerful incentive to cut their ties with the Atlantic Integrationists. Who knows, maybe Medvedev and the so-called “economic block of the government” will be shown to the door? If not, then the plunge in the polls will most likely continue, and social unrest becomes a real possibility.

The Saker

Sovereignists of all countries – unite!

June 07, 2019

We all know that the Neocons are by far the largest and most influential group of sponsors of US wars of aggression. They are the ones who lobbied the hardest for the invasion of Iraq, and they are the ones which, for decades have tried every possible dirty trick to lure the US into acts of aggression against Iran. In fact, *in terms of international law, the Neocons could be seen as a gang of international war criminals.* Why? Because, as I have already [pointed out several times](#), according to the fundamental positions of the Nuremberg Tribunal, the worst crime possible is not genocide or any other crime against humanity. The worst possible crime is the crime of *aggression* because, according to the experts who set up the Nuremberg Tribunal, the crime of aggression “contains” all the other crimes (by the way, the International Criminal Court takes the same position). In the [words of the chief American prosecutor at Nuremberg](#), Robert H. Jackson, “*to initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole.*” By that definition, every single US President would be a war criminal (at least as far as I know; if you can think of a US President who did not commit the crime of aggression – including against Native Americans! – please let me know). As for the Neocons, they could be fairly characterized as a “criminal conspiracy to commit the crime of aggression.” In a sane world, that would make them international pariahs on par with the al-Qaeda crazies (who, whether they realize it or not, were federated by the US Neocons and are still their hired guns, not so much against the West but mostly against all the other (non-Takfiri) forms of Islam, primarily Hezbollah and Iran). In fact, while most are still afraid to say so publicly, I believe that there is a growing realization amongst political analysts that the Neocons are a dangerous international gang of warmongering thugs.

What is, however, less known is that *inside* the US, the Neocons and their allies have been a prime force to dismantle the Bill of Rights, especially the First and Second Amendments.

Today, I want to give a simple yet telling example of how this kind of stuff is quietly happening with very little opposition. And for that example, I will use the US state in which I am currently living, Florida.

Check out this stunning sequence of events:

On April 11th the FL House **unanimously** (114-0) passed a [House Bill 741](#) which would define anti-Semitism as:

- “A certain perception of the Jewish people, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jewish people.”
- “Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism directed toward a person, his or her property, or toward Jewish community institutions or religious facilities.”

The bill also provides many examples of “anti-Semitism,” including:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews, often in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Accusing Jews as a people or the State of Israel of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interest of their own nations.

The bill also provides that examples of anti-Semitism related to Israel include:

- Applying a double standard to Israel by requiring behavior of Israel that is not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation, or focusing peace or human rights investigations only on Israel.
- Delegitimizing Israel by denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination and denying Israel the right to exist.



On April 29th Governor DeSantis and the Florida Cabinet met in Jerusalem ([not a joke!](#)) to proclaim their support for “the Jewish state” (*sic*) and declare that DeSantis will be the most pro-Israel governor in “America” (*sic*). The fact that holding that meeting abroad is a violation of Florida law did not bother anybody (except [The Florida First Amendment Foundation which filed a lawsuit](#) against this outrage). Neither did the fact that Israel is the last openly and [officially racist state](#) on our planet. Sadly, Florida is hardly an exception, two dozen other states ([including Texas](#)) have passed similar laws.

The tiny little fig-leaf covering the real anti-civil-rights nature of such laws is the cop-out that such laws do not technically violate the First Amendment since they “only” apply to schools (FL) or that they do not ban free speech as such, but “only” allow for disinvestment from corporations and individuals who dare to profess the “wrong” point of view about Israel (TX).

This is, of course, utter nonsense.

Since the Neocons cannot openly come out and declare “let’s abolish the First Amendment”, they use what I would call a “legislative death by a thousand cuts” meaning that rather than openly repealing the First Amendment, they simply neuter it by imposing innumerable small limitations, regulations, interpretations, restrictions, etc. etc. etc (by the way, that is how the US elites are currently also trying to dismantle the Second Amendment).

As somebody who studied in the USA and obtained two diplomas here (1986-1991), I can attest that before 9/11 US schools and campuses were a wonderful Petri dish for all sorts of opinions and ideas, including very controversial ones. The freedom of speech on US colleges was total, and it was understood and expected that all opinions and ideas were to compete on their intrinsic merits and not carefully parsed for any sign of *crimethink*. This has now totally changed: with a few exceptions, most US schools (including many colleges!) have now become ideologically monolithic, and the only possible opinion is total hatred for Trump and unconditional support for the Clinton gang.

The most toxic aspect of these freedom-crushing laws is that they are deliberately directed at the young because the ruling plutocracy fully appreciates the fact that young people are far easier to mold ideologically, to indoctrinate. Add to this that the bulk of the US “educational” system (along with the US corporate media) is designed

to actually stupidify students and make them compliant (the exact opposite of what “education” is supposed to achieve) since all that is required from 90+% of the US population are just the basic skill-sets needed to serve their overlords and ruling elites (the remaining top 10% of schools are mostly reserved for the children of the ruling US *nomenklatura* such as doctors, lawyers, engineers, etc.).

There is another aspect of this slo-mo deconstruction of civil rights in the USA which I think is extremely important to point out: I believe that the absolutely outrageous nature of such laws is not only a side-effect of the infinite arrogance of the Neocons but also a *deliberate* mind-manipulation technique. By being so “in your face” with their ideological arrogance, the Neocons are forcing everybody observing the laws into one of two camps: first, those who meekly accept whatever the Neocons want, and those who dare to resist. The first group then becomes an accomplice, a bystander, who by silence acquiesces, while the second group becomes a target to be silenced, by whatever means necessary. The similarities in other circumstances are apparent: 9/11, MH-17, Skripal, fictional gas attacks in Syria, etc. The rulers of the Empire demand that everybody endorse a narrative which is self-evidently false thereby creating a very accurate tool to measure the degree of political subservience of every person asked whether the official version is true or not.

In this context, it is quite amazing to see that very few people dare to openly question why and how a foreign power acquired such total control over a supposed superpower. There are, of course, many courageous individuals who dare to question all this (the names of Cynthia McKinney, Ron Unz, Philip Giraldi, Paul Craig Roberts, Catherine Austin-Fitts, Bonnie Faulkner and many others come to mind), but their courageous voices are drowned by a CAT5 hurricane of pro-Zionist propaganda. And, of course, when all else fails, the vapid and *nonsensical* accusation of “anti-Semitism” is used to discredit anybody whose arguments cannot be simply dismissed. Finally, the US deep-state has been very successful in its covert support for all kinds of genuinely racist movements, personalities and media outlets as a means to discredit (by supposed association) anybody critical of Israel or of Zionism. The exact same technique was used to discredit the 9/11 Truth movement which has been negatively affected on a grass-roots level by all sorts of plain stupid theories (nukes, Russian missiles, directed energy weapons, etc.) which helped to “dissolve” the serious and rigorously scientific studies of what really happened on 9/11.

One of the most devastating consequences of this Zio-compatible political orthodoxy in the USA has been that no US politician has successfully challenged the total control of the Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG – a much-discredited term, yet a totally accurate one, in my opinion). [Cynthia McKinney](#) tried, and we all know what happened to her. Even more chilling is the fact that even people like Ron Paul, Dennis Kucinich, Ralph Nader or Tulsi Gabbard clearly decided to stay away from this issue, lest they be demonized and removed from any position of power like Cynthia McKinney was.

This is all *entirely deliberate*. Just check the language used by HB 741 which clearly and repetitively conflates any rejection or condemnation of Zionism (which is an ideology) with the hatred of Jews (as a religion, ethnicity or race; FWIW, [I personally think of Jews as a tribe, not a race or ethnicity](#)). This conflation is the cornerstone of Zionist power in the West, and this is why any discussion of it is considered as an impeachable evidence of racist *crimethink*.

Still, those who, like myself, live in the USA are comparatively better off than any European dissidents since in most EU countries (and in Russia, by the way) there are already plenty of laws banning specific forms of free speech including even the so-called “Holocaust denial” and the (vaguely worded) ban on “hate speech”: there is no First Amendment in Europe and the ban on some forms of free speech has always been present in Europe (the French philosopher Alain Soral is now risking a year in jail for various “thought-crimes”. I will write about his plight in the near future).

Conclusion: in so many ways, Russians and Americans have the same problem!

Once we make the decision to call things by their proper names, it becomes evident what the problem is, of the USA: the USA is not a genuinely free or sovereign country, but an “occupied territory” ruled by a transnational gang of thugs whose ideology is as racist, messianic and as hateful as it gets (Zionism); I would, therefore, suggest that a perfect US “liberation slogan” might be “restore full sovereignty to the people”. Russia, I believe, has the same problem, albeit to a lesser degree (the most significant difference is that there are still many patriots in Russia who are willing to speak up against this state of affairs, but without falling into the trap of endorsing racist views). Fundamentally, I think that it would be fair to say that both Russia and the USA are struggling to free themselves from the yoke of a trans-national gang of thugs whose goal is world domination, literally (if you are naïve enough to believe that Zionism is

“just” the advocacy of a Jewish homeland and a relocation of any threatened Jews to “Eretz Yisrael” you are totally mistaken, see why [here](#)).

Furthermore, both Russia and the USA also suffer from the internal oppression of a ruling class, which is corrupt to the core and profoundly contemptuous of everybody else. And while these people are not united under one leader or organization, and while they don't have to have secret coordinating meetings, they have such a commonality of interests that they will always and instinctively act in concert. I know that this is not a cool thing to say in 2019, but for all his other mistakes, Karl Marx was quite correct in his realization that class struggles are what defines the structure of most societies and that class consciousness often determines how those in power act.

So, whatever we choose to call them (Neocons, Zionists, Atlantic Integrationists, 5th columnists, etc.), these labels are all situational, and we all know who we are dealing with here and how these people operate. And to those who would (inevitably) accuse us of some kind of crypto-racism we would simply reply with the words of a very famous Jew, Saint Paul, who said: “*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*” (Eph. 6:12). Besides, blaming Jews for Zionism is about as logical as blaming Russians for Bolshevism, Germans for National Socialism or blaming US Americans for imperialism: this is both counter-factual and profoundly immoral. But, not to worry, the Pope [has already declared](#) that Christians have to ask for pardon for “19 centuries of Christian anti-Judaism”! I suppose that soon the Latins will declare Saint Paul an “optional saint” ([like they did with Saint Nicholas](#)). In fact, judging by [the Pope's obsession with denouncing anti-Semitism](#), we can safely assume that soon such notorious “anti-Semites” like Saint Paul, Saint Cyprian of Carthage, Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Ephrem the Syrian, Saint Ambrose of Milan, Saint Justin Martyr and many others will soon be made “optional”. At the end of the day, I fully expect these folks to make Christ Himself “optional,” again for His anti-Semitism (especially in the Gospels of Saint Matthew and Saint John which will surely be “corrected” in the near future).

Russians and US Americans live in very different societies with very different histories. Yet I believe that rather than futilely hoping that Russia will one day become a backer of the (deep-state sponsored and therefore *truly* racist) Alt-Right, it would be far more realistic and productive to hope that all the people of Russia and the USA, irrespective of their race, ethnicity or religion, join forces to struggle to recover their

sovereignty over their country. It does not matter what ideology the trans-national plutocracy happens to advocate as long as the rest of us realize that true sovereignty is the counter-poison which will restore our freedoms and stop wars of aggression (which only the ruling elites benefit from). Today the Neocons are enemy #1 for the US. The Russian 5th columnists are the enemy #1 for Russia. Showing how they work towards the same goals is, I believe, one of the first things which those who resist these thugs must achieve. Paraphrasing Marx, I would suggest this slogan: “sovereignists of all countries – unite!”

The Saker

The Saker interviews Aram Mirzaei on Iran

June 13, 2019



Introduction by the Saker:

For a while now we have been lucky enough to have a wonderful Iranian member of the Saker community writing analyses for the Saker Blog: Aram Mirzaei has brought a wealth of expertise and priceless insights into Iran and everything Iran-related. Clearly, after the DPRK, Syria and Venezuela – Iran is now the target of Trump’s ignorant hubris and threats and it is therefore extremely important to debunk of AngloZionist propaganda about Iran and its role and actions in the Middle-East. This interview with Aram Mirzaei is just the first step of a major effort by the Saker community to report more often about Iran. Expect much more in the near future. In the meantime, I will let Aram introduce himself and then reply to my questions.

The Saker

My name is Aram Mirzaei, I’m 30 years old and live somewhere in Europe. Originally, I hail from western Iran, a place that is deeply rooted in my heart. Ever since my teenage years, I’ve had a passion for history and politics, a trait I inherited

from my mother who was an Iranian revolutionary. Naturally, this passion made me choose to study political science all the way up to my Master's degree. Having supported my country against foreign threats my entire adult life, I became an activist for the Resistance Axis when the Syrian War broke out in 2011 and have combined my passion for writing and politics, to contribute to the propaganda fight that runs in parallel with the fighting on the ground. Thus, I have indulged myself in anything related to Iran, in an effort to have a complete understanding of the land that I was born in and where my forefathers once dwelled. Aside from these interests, I also love philosophy, sociology, religion, football (soccer) and trading, with a specific focus on crypto currencies.

The Saker: *Please explain what an “Islamic Republic” is and how it is different from any other republic? What makes the Iranian political system unique? How democratic (vs theocratic) is it? Do you consider Iran to be a democratic country (in the sense that the will of the people is the highest, sovereign, authority)?*

Aram Mirzaei: These are very relevant questions as this issue is something most outsiders have a hard time understanding. Growing up in the West, I myself had a hard time understanding this system until I read Imam Khomeini's manifesto: Islamic Governance – rule of the jurisprudence. Here, Khomeini offers a very unique viewpoint and insight into his ideas of a modern Islamic form of government. Khomeini views the Western democratic system as a foreign way of governance, not suited for Muslim countries, while he also correctly identifies the deep flaws within the contemporary Islamic forms of governance; that they are outdated monarchies prone to corruption and decadence.

Simply put, Khomeini offers a compromise between Western Democracy and Islamic Sharia law. To understand this form of government, one must understand the background of Shia Islamic scholarship and the theological debate regarding Islamic government. As many already know, modern Twelver Shia faith rest on the pillar of the Occultation, the belief that the messianic figure, also known as Mahdi, who in Shia theology is the last (Twelfth) infallible male descendant (Imam) of the prophet Mohammad, was born but disappeared, and will one day return and fill the world with justice and peace. In this time of post-Occultation the theory of Velayat-e Faqih (Rule of the Jurisprudence), holds that Islam shall give a Faqih (Islamic jurist) custodianship over the people, in the absence of the Hidden Imam.

The doctrine of Velayat-e Faqih has been an issue that has divided the Shia Islamic scholars between the ideas of a so called Limited Guardianship and an Absolute Guardianship of the jurisprudence. Traditionally, Limited Guardianship has been the dominant interpretation where Mujtahids (Islamic scholars) have left secular power to the monarchs while the Ulema's (clerical class) role has been limited to non-litigious affairs. This interpretation holds that the Ulema should only assume an advisory role to the monarch who is responsible for the task of protecting the country. For centuries, especially during the time of the Safavid Shahs, Iran was ruled this way, with the Ulema assuming an advisory role in the royal court of the Shahs. Only during the Pahlavi dynasty of the 20th century did this begin to change as Reza Shah Pahlavi, initiated radical secular changes to the Iranian society as a whole.

The idea of Absolute Guardianship hails from the belief that collective affairs fall under the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist. Before Khomeini, there had been a few scholars arguing for Absolute Guardianship, yet none of them gained the amount of influence as Khomeini did. He presented the concept as necessary to protect and preserve Islam during the Occultation of the Imam. According to Khomeini, a society should be governed by those who are the most knowledgeable about Islamic law, this is his main argument in what an Islamic Government actually is. In his manifesto, Khomeini argues that monarchy is un-Islamic. In a true Islamic state, those holding government posts should have knowledge of Sharia, as well as having intelligence and administrative ability. Thus the monarchy becomes redundant in such a governing system, paving the way for a Republic to take its place instead. Specifically Khomeini argued that the un-Islamic government "though it may be made up of elected representatives does not truly belong to the people" in the case of Muslim countries.

Where Shia Mujtahids have tended to remain outside the active political sphere, Khomeini argues that leading Mujtahids also have inherited the Prophet's political authority by explicating several ahadiths of the Shia Imams. An example is his analysis of a saying attributed to the first Imam, Ali, who, in addressing a judge said:

"The seat you are occupying is filled by someone who is a prophet, the legatee of a prophet, or else a sinful wretch."

Khomeini reasons that the term judges must refer to trained fuqaha (jurists) as they are "by definition learned in matters pertaining to the function of judge", and since trained jurists are neither sinful wretches nor prophets, by process of elimination "we deduce from the tradition quoted above that the fuqaha are the legatees." He explains

that legatees of the prophet have the same power to command Muslims as the Prophet Muhammad and (in Shia belief) the Imams. Thus, the saying, 'The seat you are occupying is filled by someone who is a prophet, the legatee of a prophet, or else a sinful wretch,' demonstrates that Islamic jurists have the power to rule Muslims.

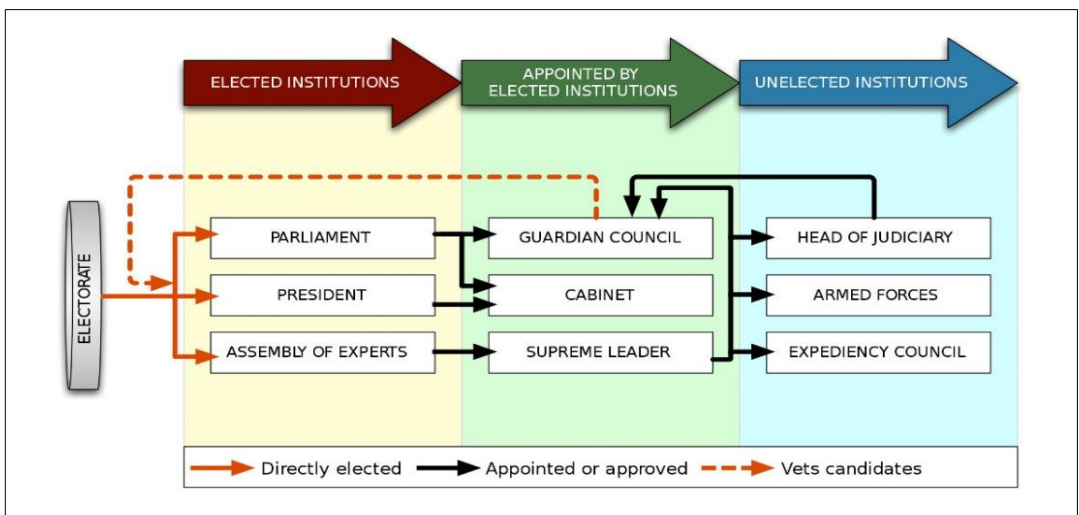
According to the constitution of Iran, an Islamic republic is defined as a state ruled by the Fuqaha. In accordance with Qur'an and on the basis of two principles of the trusteeship and the permanent Imamate (bloodline of the Prophet), it is counted as a function of the jurists. Also it is explained that only the jurists that are upright, pious and committed experts on Islam are entitled to rule. Also those who are informed of the demands of the times and known as God-fearing, brave and qualified for leadership. In addition they must hold the religious office of Marja (the highest rank in the Shia clerical establishment) and be permitted to deliver independent judgments on general principles (fatwas). The Marja has only the right to rule the Islamic Republic for as long as the Twelfth and final Imam remains in Occultation.

In this sense, the Islamic Republic of Iran is unique in comparison to other so called "Islamic Republics" such as Pakistan and Afghanistan as they are governed by secular constitutions and are only Islamic Republics by name rather than in practice. In both theory and practice, the Velayat-e Faqih differs radically from any other form of government, both Western and Eastern models.

Whether or not this system can be considered "democratic" is really a subjective matter. I personally don't like the contemporary opinions on what constitutes a democracy as they are very much formed and dictated by Western ideas and standards. The generally accepted tools of measurement on democracy in the world follow liberal democratic criteria formulated by liberal thinkers and scholars. This narrows down countries into liberal democracies, so called true democracies and non-liberal democracies, also known as "flawed democracies" in their world view.

As I mentioned earlier, the Islamic Republic is a compromise between Western democracy and Islamic theocracy, which makes it hard to compare to the western notion on what constitutes a democracy, and since there aren't any other Islamic Republics to compare it to, it makes it even more difficult to measure how democratic it is. But let's begin by stating the obvious, the Islamic Republic is a republic, which means that the state belongs to the people and not a ruler. The Supreme Leader, or Rahbar Enghelab (Revolutionary Leader) is not a monarch and the title is not hereditary.

Lawmakers are directly elected by the people, as is the President as well. The Iranian elections are considered not “free and fair” by western standards due to the vetting process by the unelected Guardian council, but this is where the theocratic nature of the Islamic Republic becomes prevalent, as the vetting process is important for the elimination of anti-Islamic elements in the government. Another point of confusion is the role of the Supreme Leader, a role that many outsiders have misunderstood. The truth is that while the President rules the government and politics of the country, the Supreme Leader’s role is one of oversight. Think of the Supreme Leader as the U.S Supreme Court, where the Supreme Leader has a duty to uphold the Islamic Republic’s core values, much like the Supreme Court in the U.S upholds the constitution.



The Supreme Leader is chosen by the elected institution called the Assembly of Experts, which is tasked with overseeing the performance and activities of the Supreme Leader. The Assembly of Experts also has the power to impeach a Supreme Leader if needed, thus not even the Supreme Leader is untouchable. The Supreme Leader in turn then elects the members of the Guardian Council who are responsible for the vetting I mentioned above. So you can see that the Islamic Republic is a system filled with checks and balances between elected and unelected institutions. **The Saker: Wikipedia (hardly a trustworthy source) has this picture of the Iranian government structure: ...Is it correct?**

Aram Mirzaei: I would say that this depiction of the Iranian government structure is not exactly inaccurate, but it also fails to offer a comprehensive picture of the checks and balance system that plays a huge part in Iranian politics. This depiction focuses a

lot on who is elected and who is not, instead of focusing on the different branches of government and their roles. Let me explain: The **Supreme Leader** as mentioned above is a superintendent, who oversees the Executive and Judiciary branch, while he also acts as commander of the **Armed Forces** of the Islamic Republic. The Supreme Leader in turn is appointed by the directly elected **Assembly of Experts** which is made up of 88 Mujtahids, and as I mentioned before, the Assembly of Experts has the power to remove him if necessary.

The **Parliament and the President** are directly elected by the people. While the President chooses his cabinet, the Parliament is responsible with electing 6 out of 12 members of the powerful Guardian Council, these 6 members are nominated by the **Head of the Judiciary**, who in turn is appointed by the Supreme Leader. These 6 members are non-clerical jurists while the other 6 members appointed by the Supreme Leader are faqihs.

The **Guardian Council**, acts as an upper consultative assembly. It is charged with interpreting the Constitution of the Islamic Republic, supervising elections of, and approving of candidates to the Assembly of Experts, the President and the Parliament. Any laws made by the parliament must be approved by the Guardian Council.

The **Expediency council** is an advisory assembly set up in 1988 to act as an intermediary between the Parliament and Guardian Council whenever conflicts occur. It is directly appointed by the Supreme Leader.

The Saker: *The western media always loves to think in terms of “hardliners” and “liberals” in each country they don’t control. To what degree are these categories applicable to Iran?*

Aram Mirzaei: The terms as you say, is a way for the Western media to simplify the different categories of political movements in Iran. I would rather say that a better way of dividing the political spectrum in Iran is to say that there are Reformists and Conservatives. While the term “conservative” is difficult to apply on Iranian society, the existence of a conservative movement, or as they prefer to be called, Principalists, is a reality. The Iranian political spectrum can somewhat loosely be defined as a division between the Islamic left (Reformists) and the Islamic right (Principalists).

The Iranian Principalist bloc of today emerged as a response to the rising power of the reformist movement, headed by known figures such as former Iranian President

and cleric Mohammad Khatami and to some extent former President Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, one of the richest people in the country. Iranian principalism however dates further back in history. It roots back to the early 20th century with the constitutional revolution, which demonstrated the power of the clerical class as the Qajar dynasty was disposed by Reza Khan (later Reza Shah Pahlavi), a man who clashed many times with the clergy. The Shah had initiated a set of reforms aimed at modernizing the country. Along with this modernization effort the Women's Awakening movement gained strength. This movement sought the elimination of the traditional Iranian chador from Iranian society. This movement was backed by the Shah who sought inspiration from western clothing for his society. The religious establishment were fiercely opposed to this and organized protests against obligatory Western dressing in Mashhad, resulting in the Shah ordering his soldiers to shoot at the crowds protesting.

The policies of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, the son and successor of Reza Shah Pahlavi, further sowed division between the clergy and the royal court. The young Shah's role in the 1953 coup against the democratically elected Prime Minister Dr Mohammad Mossadeq, the failed "white revolution" which only served to further accelerate his unpopularity. Once more the clergy assumed the position of anti-imperialists in the Iranian political spectrum, arguing that the Shah was a dictator put in place by a non-Muslim Western power, the United States. As witnessed several times before, the clergy and the powerful merchant class, the Bazariis played a crucial role in forming the Iranian political landscape, this was also the case in 1979 when the clergy and the merchants came together to overthrow the monarchy.

The Islamic revolution in Iran brought about a total change to the political landscape of Iran as Iranian politics was now contained within an Islamic framework, free from foreign meddling, imperialism and dependency. This is the platform which the modern Principalist movement still use in their political campaigns.

Principalism focuses on broad conservative principles: loyalty to Islam and the Revolution, obedience to the Supreme Leader, and devotion to the principle of Velayat-e Faqih.

This set of principles implicitly endorses the status quo and the current power structure. It is also a response to the reformist parties' emphasis on change: free elections, freedom of the press and assembly and individual rights, and, implicitly,

curbs on the almost unlimited power of the Supreme Leader, and limits on the authority of the Guardian Council to disqualify candidates for elective office.

The Principalists include dozens of small cliques and political organizations each centred around a limited number of politicians, activists, clerics, and members of parliament and state institutions.

The conservatism of these groups varies too. They fall generally into four categories:

- Traditional conservatives may stand firm on social issues, such as Islamic dress for women and bans on gender mixing, but they are more open to possible reconciliation with centrist reformers, albeit with many caveats.
- Another group of new conservatives cares less about social issues, but they are closely aligned with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) military-security nexus whose influence has grown markedly in recent years.
- A third conservative wing is closely allied to the bazaar merchants, importers, and shopkeepers.
- A fourth branch, championed by former Ahmadinejad supporters, is populist in temperament and intent.

In their drive for unity, almost all the conservative politicians now label themselves “Osul-garayan”, or “Principalists.”

The reformist era of Iran is generally accepted to have occurred between the years 1997-2005, during President Khatami’s two terms in office.

Khatami and his allies were the remnants of the Islamic left faction, hardliners who from 1979 to 1989 were the driving force behind many of the Islamic Republic’s signature policies. Domestically this included violently eliminating the political opposition to the Islamic Republic, enforcing strict Islamic morality through revolutionary committees and nationalizing Iran’s economy. They were behind the seizure of the US embassy in Tehran and were instrumental to the founding of Hezbollah in Lebanon. In the first decade of the newly found Islamic Republic they had been strongly backed by the Vali-e Faqih or Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and governed through the Executive under then Prime Minister Mir-Hossein Mousavi (1981-1989).

Between 1988 to 1991, with the end Iran-Iraq War, the fall of the Soviet Union and the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, political stabilization of the state through social change, the Islamic left's fortunes rapidly declined. Firstly the end of the war put an end to the state of emergency under which the Islamic left exercised their influence. Secondly, the collapse of the Soviet Union delegitimized the statist economy which had been used to govern the Iranian economy in the first decade of the Islamic Republic. Thirdly, the passing of Ayatollah Khomeini, the staunch backer of the Islamic left was a huge blow to their political power.

Their rivals, the Islamic right faction, capitalized on this by selecting their own Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as the new Supreme Leader and Rafsanjani as president, eliminating the Premiership from the constitution, veto-ing Islamic left election candidates through the Guardian Council, purging them from unelected state institutions, and more. Having been eliminated from the system, the Islamic left entered a period of retreat in which it reassessed its place in the Islamic Republic. They emerged from this process "reformed", the namesake of their faction.

After having lost their standing in the Islamic Republic's powerful non-elected institutions, the newly formed Reformists under Mohammad Khatami regained political power by appealing to Iran's restless segments of society yearning for change, and channeled popular frustration through elected institutions.

In an interview with the Rah-e No newspaper in 1998, Reformist theoretician Saeed Hajjarian characterized this strategy for achieving their goals as "pressure from below, negotiations from above." The barren political landscape in Iran during the 1997 presidential election, including the lackluster Islamic right candidate Nateq Nouri, and the tacit support of Rafsanjani who by this time had distanced himself from Khamenei and the Islamic right, resulted in a landslide victory for Khatami.

The initial shock of Khatami's electoral victory did not faze the Islamic right who rallied under the banner of "preserving the principles of the revolution", thus rebranding themselves as the Principalists.

The reformists won the Majlis elections of 2000, and Khatami was re-elected in 2001, the Principalists however were able to effectively block them through institutional obstructionism. In the 2004 Majlis elections, many prominent Reformist politicians were deemed unfit to stand for office by the powerful Guardian Council, an appointed and constitutionally-mandated 12-member council that wields considerable

power and influence in the Islamic Republic. This strategy crippled the pillars of Reformist theoretician Hajjarians strategy of “negotiating from above”, by excluding them from political institutions.

While the first incarnation of Hajjarian’s “pressure from below, negotiations from above” had failed, it was reinvented by the 2009 election campaign and its aftermath. By conducting an electrifying electoral campaign and using social media, Reformists would use the deep discontent that had built up during Ahmadinejad’s four years in office among certain segments of the population, and bring “pressure from below” by mobilizing this group onto the streets.

This gave Reformists a new weapon to wield against Principalists in case of perceived electoral irregularities, using popular pressure to overturn the election results, elect Mousavi as president and thus restore their ability to “negotiate from above”.

On June 12th, they used this weapon when the election results were announced in favor of the incumbent Ahmadinejad. While there were no actual evidence that proves electoral fraud, the widespread perception among certain segments of the Iranian population took to the streets en masse. This was made possible through the heavy use of social media by the Reformists. The Green movement, once more gave birth to Hajjarians “pressure from below, negotiations from above”.

It did however not take long until the “pressure from below” resulted in severe consequences for the Reformists as their movement most resembles the color revolutions of former Soviet bloc countries such as Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. In color revolutions one faction within a regime creates “pressure from below” by mobilizing popular energy and channelling it into “negotiating from above” and improves its own position in the regime, usually in the context of allegations of electoral fraud. While this strategy was successful up to a point in the semi-authoritarian former Soviet bloc, in Iran the Principalist faction and IRGC rapidly mobilized to crush the uprising. Through the act of applying popular pressure on the IRI, the Reformists had crossed a ‘red-line’ and from this point were effectively purged from the system, once again destroying their ability to “negotiate from above”.

The Saker: It is often said that the IRGC and the Basij are the Iranian “hardliners”. Is that true? What is their real political influence?

Aram Mirzaei: Well, it is true that the IRGC and the Basij are connected to the so called “hardliners” or rather the conservative bloc. This is because The Pasdaran was from its inception an ideologically driven force that recruited heavily from the faithful supporters of the revolution’s spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. In Iran, it is known even today that the most devout and faithful supporters of the Islamic Republic are those that join the IRGC and the Basij volunteer forces. Furthermore, most of the conservative bloc’s candidates for parliament and the presidency are former IRGC members and veterans of the Iran-Iraq war. As the veteran commander of the IRGC once said: “Unlike the army [...] the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps is in charge of safeguarding the revolution and its gains [...]. we in the Revolutionary Guards give primary importance to the ideological and political dimensions more than the military ones.

For a deeper insight into the IRGC, I would recommend you read my extensive article on the IRGC and the Basij [here](#).

The Saker: *In the West, the IRGC and, especially, the Quds force are considered as evil “terrorists”. How are they seen in Iran?*

Aram Mirzaei: It really depends on who you’re asking. There are those that would answer that the IRGC are the saviours of the Islamic Republic, especially considering their role in defending the country against Saddam Hussein’s invasion in 1980. On the other hand, there are also those who despise the IRGC and the Basij due to their staunch loyalty to the Islamic Republic and their efforts to eradicate deviant elements of the daily political life. After all, the Islamic Republic made great efforts during the 1980’s to eliminate all opposing movements aiming at establishing alternative systems in Iran, such as communists, liberals and separatists. Needless to say, the IRGC and the Basij are very unpopular among most Iranian ex-pats and Sunni minorities such as Kurds and Baluchis, as both of these ethnic groups have relatively large separatist sentiments among their populations.

The Saker: **what are the various political forces/currents/movements in Iran today? Can you please list them, the main people who represent these forces, and what their political views/goals are?**

Aram Mirzaei: As mentioned above, the current divide in the Iranian political spectrum is between the Reformists and the Principalists. There are however a lot of

fringe movements both inside and outside the country, with different goals and views. These range from islamists, to separatists, to monarchists and “liberals”.

I’ve written [before](#) about the different separatist groups in Iran and their foreign backers. Mostly these can be found among the Sunni minorities of Western and Eastern Iran, but also among the Arab minority in Khuzestan who are fuelled and backed by the Gulf states in their anti-Iranian campaigns.

Furthermore, there are terrorist groups such as the so called “People’s Mujahideen” (MEK), lead by Maryam Rajavi, the wife of the late Massoud Rajavi. The MEK is said to be driven by some mix of Islamic and Socialist ideology, something that they themselves deny. The U.S government claims that their ideology is a mix of Marxism, Islamism and feminism, but no one can really know for sure. What however can be said for certain is that the MEK’s main aim is to overthrow the Islamic Republic, despite having helped overthrow the U.S backed Pahlavi regime and ever since the early days of the revolution. They have ever since changed many of their stances in pursuit of ideological opportunism. Such examples include the shift in their anti-Zionist position to becoming “allies of Israel”.

Since the Revolution, the MEK has also engaged in a lot of terrorist attacks, having killed an estimated 16 000 Iranians over the years. Key figures of the Islamic Republic have also been targeted such as Army Commander Ali Sayad Shirazi, Asadollah Lajevardi, director of Iran’s prison system, former President Mohammad-Ali Rajaei, former Prime Minister Mohammad-Javad Bahonar and former Chief of Justice Mohammad Beheshti. In 1981, they failed to assassinate Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei but left him permanently disfigured, losing use of his right arm. Recent assassinations include targeting Iranian Nuclear scientists at the behest of Zionist orders.

Ever since their failed invasion of Iran in 1988, the MEK has remained in exile in Iraq and nowadays in Albania where they continue to operate against the Islamic Republic.

Other fringe groups are also the Communists, which used to be the second largest movement during the revolution after the Islamists. The Communists had a lot of members and mobilized themselves during the early days of the revolution, offering an alternative to the Islamic Republic. I don’t think I need to explain what the Communists were seeking to establish, but they failed mainly due to their own

shortcomings rather than the animosity they faced from the Islamists. Yes, it is true that the Islamic Republic went to lengths to eradicate these Communist movements, but their greatest enemy was their own division where the largest parties split into several splinter factions due to internal disagreement between Maoists and Stalinists. The Communists were mostly destroyed after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, along with most other Communist movements across the world and remain today a very small group of ex-pats who pose little to no threat to the Islamic Republic.

Lastly, there are the Monarchists. They mostly went into exile during the revolution, opting to pack up their wealth and move to the U.S. along with the Royal family. They continue to support the so called “heir” to the throne, Reza Cyrus Pahlavi, the son of the late Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to re-establish the monarchy, albeit with some minor “changes” to it. In their own words, they aim to establish a constitutional monarchy where the Shah is supposed to remain only a figurehead much like the European monarchies. Ironically, this is the same promise his father made to Iran before reneging on his promises and ruling the country with an iron fist. The Monarchists often align themselves with the MEK in their attempts to discredit the Islamic Republic, and often jump at any chance to do so. Just take a quick look at Twitter if you don’t believe me!

The Saker: Islam can come in very conservative and in very progressive “modes”. It seems to me that thinkers like Ali Shariati or even Sayyid Qutb would represent a more progressive version of Islam, especially in social, economic and political terms. Is this correct? Who are the main thinkers, besides Ayatollah Khomeini, who influenced the Islamic Revolution and who are the most influential thinkers in Iran today?

Aram Mirzaei: I would argue that Shariati was a Socialist Muslim thinker who tried to blend Shiism with a revolutionary fervour. He referred to his ideas as Red Shiism in contrast to what he perceived as black Shiism, the same kind that was prevalent during the Safavid Shahs and the Qajar dynasty. Black Shiism in this sense can be compared to the Limited Guardianship of the Jurisprudence as explained above. Shariati played a much larger role in the Islamic Revolution and the formation of the Islamic Republic than he is credited for. He suggested that the role of government was to guide society in the best possible manner rather than manage it in the best possible way. He believed that the most learned members of the Ulema should play a leadership role in guiding society because they best understand how to

administer an Islamic value system based on the teachings of the Prophets of God and the 12 Shia Twelver Imams. He also argued that the role of the Ulema was to guide society in accordance with Islamic values to advance human beings towards reaching their highest potential—not to provide the hedonistic desires of individuals as in the West.

At the same time Shariati was very critical of the contemporary Ulema and defended the Marxists. *“Our mosques, the revolutionary left and our preachers,”* he declared, *“work for the benefit of the deprived people and against the lavish and lush... Our clerics who teach jurisprudence and issue fatwas are right-wingers, capitalist, and conservative; simply our fight is at the service of capitalism.”* Despite this criticism of the Ulema, even today, many in the Islamic Republic, such as Khamenei praise Shariati for his influences.

Another main influencer of the Islamic Revolution was the late Ayatollah Beheshti who served as Chief of Justice before his assassination in 1981. Beheshti was known to be the second in command of the Revolution, after Ayatollah Khomeini, and had it not been for his early death, he would most likely have been the one who succeeded him as Supreme Leader. Beheshti is also known to have been a mentor figure for several prominent politicians in the Islamic Republic, such as current President Hassan Rouhani, former President Mohammad Khatami, Ali Akbar Velayati, Mohammad Javad Larijani, Ali Fallahian, and Mostafa Pourmohammadi. Following the Revolution, he was part of the original Council of Revolution and played an important role in the formation of the Islamic Republic’s economy, promoting cooperative companies known as Ta’avoni. Instead of competition, in Ta’avoni companies there is no mediation between producer and consumer. He also asserted that in such companies, rights belong to humans rather than stocks.

The Saker: Tehran is the political capital of Iran. Qom is often considered the spiritual capital of Iran. Is that so? If so, how much influence/power does Qom have as compared to Tehran?

Aram Mirzaei: Yes, this is true, but one must also remember that the Mujtahids, both the ones in the Assembly of Experts and the ones in the Guardian Council including the office of Supreme Leader are all educated in Qom. Thus Qom holds a significant influence over Tehran’s policies. One should not see these two cities as rivals as Qom mostly provides Tehran religious legitimacy. In this sense Qom holds a lot of power over Tehran as a centre of religious learning, offering guidance to Tehran’s

policies. This was however not always the case as Qom stood as a major rival to Tehran during the pre-revolutionary times. Ayatollah Khomeini for example led his opposition to the Monarchy from Qom where his seminars played a major role in mobilizing the Ulema to unite under his banner.

The Saker: Which are the officially “protected” religions of Iran and what is their status today? Would you say that these religions enjoy all the freedoms they need? What is the state’s view of these non-Islamic religions?

Aram Mirzaei: Iran is home to many different religions and faiths, all of which have a long history in Iran. Iran is home to almost 300 000 Armenian Christians of the Armenian Apostolic Church and 20 000 Assyrian Christians, some 10 000 Jews and some 60 000 Zoroastrians.

The officially recognized religions in Iran, aside from Islam of course, include Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism. These religious minorities are protected by law and constitution, thus they are also entitled to hold parliamentary seats and have the right to exercise their faiths. Two seats are reserved for Christians in parliament, the largest minority faith, while Jews and Zoroastrians are allocated one seat each.

Christianity in Iran dates back to the early years of the faith, pre-dating Islam. During the era of the two great Persian Empires, Armenia used to be an important part of Iran. As such it has always been a minority religion relative to the majority state religions (Zoroastrianism before the Islamic conquest, Sunni Islam in the Middle Ages and Shia Islam in modern times), though it had a much larger representation in the past than it does today. Currently there are at least 600 churches in the country, mostly found in northwestern Iran and the Tehran region.

Jews have lived in Iran since the ancient times of the Persian Empires, and used to number about 50 000 citizens in Iran, many of which have today emigrated to Israel. Still some 10 000 Jews remain in Iran today and enjoy the same freedoms as Christians and Zoroastrians do. Ayatollah Khomeini even met with the Jewish community upon his return from exile in Paris, when heads of the community arranged to meet him in Qom. At one point he said:

“In the holy Quran, Moses, salutations upon him and all his kin, has been mentioned more than any other prophet. Prophet Moses was a mere shepherd when he stood up to the might of pharaoh and destroyed him.

Moses, the Speaker-to-Allah, represented pharaoh's slaves, the downtrodden, the mostazafeen (oppressed) of his time."

At the end of the discussion Khomeini declared, "We recognize our Jews as separate from those godless, bloodsucking Zionists" and issued a fatwa decreeing that the Jews were to be protected.

Zoroastrianism is the native religion of Iran and was the state religion of the two Persian Empires long before Islam was introduced. Even today, Zoroastrianism plays an important part in modern Iranian culture, as can be seen with the continued celebrations of the Iranian new year Nowruz. Low birth rates have affected the Zoroastrian community in Iran as their numbers have been on the decline for some time now. In 2013, they did however make headlines when Sepanta Niknam was elected to the city council of Yazd (a major stronghold of the Zoroastrian community) and became the first Zoroastrian councilor in Iran.

The Saker: is there a big generational gap in Iran, especially in terms of politics? How would you compare the views/goals/beliefs of young Iranians vs the older generation?

Aram Mirzaei: There is a debate today on whether or not there is a big generational gap in Iran. I would definitely argue that there is, as the difference between the older, revolutionary generation and the modern youth in Iran is pretty prevalent. Let us not forget that the Revolutionary generation grew up in much harsher conditions, in a very backward Iran that lacked infrastructure, education and many of the freedoms that the younger generation enjoy today. Furthermore, they never experienced the eight year long war with Iraq, thus they don't remember the sacrifices that the Revolutionary generation had to make in order to save this country. Another point that should be made is the introduction of modern technologies in Iran. This has given the younger generation access to Western culture and influences, something that is much more of a threat to the Islamic Republic's survival than any U.S threat of military action in my opinion. Ayatollah Khamenei often speaks about what he calls cultural warfare, or rather poisoning of the mind. I tend to agree with his analysis as many young people in Iran today have taken much of the decadent Western influences to heart and yearn for the Western lifestyle, something that I have witnessed myself whenever I've returned back to Iran. Comparing the Revolutionary generation, where politics played a major role in everyone's lives, with the post-revolutionary generation who remains rather apolitical and care much less about the

political lives of their parents, I can clearly see a pattern where passive Western values have gained a foothold in the minds of the younger generation. Whenever I'm in Iran, I often notice that the older generation often partake in political discussions whereas the younger generations prefer to occupy themselves with trivial matters.

The state does recognize this and for this reason it has done its utmost to counter this terrible influence, hence why social media outlets such as Youtube and Facebook are from time to time banned in Iran. This lack of interest in politics has also dumbed down the youth in Iran who often fail to see that the suffering economy and hardships in the country are mostly to be blamed on U.S sanctions and economic terrorism by the Zionist Empire. Rather many tend to believe in the MEK's Twitter lies that all of Iran's money is going to fighting "freedom loving rebels" in Syria and "terrorizing the peaceful nation of Israel", hence why the rioters and protesters earlier this year directed a lot of their chants against Syria and Palestine in an effort to vent their frustration towards rising prices on commodity and fuel instead of actually seeing the correlation between Washington's reintroduction of sanctions and the failing economy of the Islamic Republic.

The Saker interviews Edik, a Quaker living in Russia

June 20, 2019

The topic of religion in Russia is a most interesting one, yet the majority of articles on this topic typically focus on Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Judaism and, sometimes, Buddhism. Yet there are other religions in Russia and, in fact, there have always been. When I learned that an active member of the Saker community, Edik (pseudonym), was a Quaker I asked him for an interview. I was curious, how does a member of a relatively small denomination view modern Russia and the role of religion in the Russian society. I am very grateful to Edik for his replies.

The Saker

The Saker: please explain what a Quaker is and how you became one?

Edik: “Quaker” is a member of the Religious Society of Friends, a small Protestant movement which was founded in England in the 1640s. Our formal name comes from John 15:15, in which Jesus says “Henceforth I do not call you servants; for the servant knows not what his lord does; but I have called you friends...”. Initially, “Quaker” was a derisive nickname used by outsiders because many early members of the movement used to tremble during worship, from the intensity of their emotions. The name has, however, now ended up in common usage, including by us.

Quaker belief is based on direct experience of Jesus Christ, often described as an “inward light” who illuminates our sin and brings us through it to salvation. We believe that every person has the capacity to experience the light of Christ. Quakers try to do so through silent, or “unprogrammed”, worship. This involves silently and patiently waiting upon the Holy Spirit, without hymns, sermons or other ceremonies. On occasion, a person may feel led by the Holy Spirit to offer a verbal testimony which the meeting will listen to and consider in silence. The reason that Quaker worship does not involve creeds, hymns, liturgies and rituals is that we feel these might distract us from the Inward Light (although, since the 19th century, some Quaker meetings do set aside part of the meeting for the singing of hymns, separately from the unprogrammed worship). As we emphasise direct experience of God, we do not have

clergy or churches (our attitude is that any gathering of the faithful is the church, rather than a man-made structure).

The unstructured nature of the Quaker organisation and belief system has resulted in a great diversity of practice among Quakers. However, we all subscribe to the core principles of equality, integrity, simplicity and peace. These principles call on us to treat every person with respect; be truthful and honest; lead a simple life that avoids wasteful or frivolous consumption; and to reject all forms of violence. Quakers have put these principles into practice by, for example, being early opponents of slavery; dealing fairly with the Native American nations in the US (unlike many of the other European colonists); and, more recently, actively opposing militarism and the arms trade, and promoting non-violent ways to resolve disputes.

As to how I came to Quakerism, like many others, this happened through a period of inner conflict. I'd actually had a fairly religious (Protestant) upbringing with regular attendance at services and Bible study, but having religion forced on me turned me into a determined atheist. After school I was focused on my career, making money, owning things, friends, relationships, travel. I practically never thought about religion and when I did it was usually in a negative context. By the time I was in my mid-40s though, I did feel a vague dissatisfaction with life – in particular work, career and money no longer held the same interest. On the contrary, I'd seen a lot of politics, insincerity and dishonesty in the corporate world and it disillusioned me. But I just continued what I was doing, although it was largely going through the motions. It took a tragedy that befell a close friend of mine to shock me into thinking that there had to be something more in life than material things that could disappear on the turn of a coin. One night shortly after, when I couldn't sleep, I decided to surf the internet. I don't know what prompted me to google "Quakers" but I did this and started reading about Quakerism on Wikipedia. What I read about the Quakers and their beliefs stirred something in me so I decided to find the nearest Quaker meeting. Not sure about whether there would be Quakers in Russia, I decided to try attending a Quaker meeting for worship in London. I had never experienced anything like it, I felt as though the silent worship brought me close to the presence of God yet at the same time I was in room with other worshippers who were also sharing in that Presence. Totally different from the sort of religion that I had grown up with. I've been attending Quaker meetings for almost 4 years now.

The Saker: Russia has 5 “traditional religions” Russian Orthodoxy, several other Christian denominations, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism. Quakers are not on the list. Has that been a problem for you?

Edik: It has not been a problem for me (nor have I heard of other Quakers facing issues because of this). My personal view is that because Quakers have always been outside the mainstream – even in England, where we were persecuted for almost 200 years – we do not consider it relevant to our spiritual life to be part of a “traditional religion” in any country. The number of Quakers in Russia has never been substantial so it would be rather presumptuous of us to try and claim the same status as Orthodox Christianity, Judaism or Islam!

Today, there are probably fewer than 100 Quakers in Russia, mostly in and around Moscow. Not being recognised as a “traditional religion” of Russia doesn’t really affect us in practice. We don’t engage in proselytising and our meetings for worship are very low-key. Therefore, we don’t need to have a large organisation or to own real estate here in Russia. We do raise money for a couple of Russian charities but otherwise, individual Quakers volunteer their personal time to engage in activities that are close to the ideals of Quaker faith – helping children with disabilities or refugees, and running workshops on alternatives to violence. I’m sure the authorities are aware that we exist – we are open about our meetings and activities – but I suspect that we’re just too low profile and unimportant for them to really care.

The Saker: What is your personal observation about the degree of religiosity of most Russians? What percentage would you say is really religious and what percentage are just superficially “culturally” religious?

Edik: In general, I think that most Russians are more concerned with the issues of day-to-day living (as I was for many years of my life) and don’t think about spiritual issues very much. I would say that a large majority (perhaps as many as 80%) of ethnic Russians identify with Orthodox Christianity. Within this group, I estimate that three quarters treat Orthodoxy primarily as a cultural affiliation – ie., part of being a “Russian” – and are only occasional practitioners (eg., they baptise their children, observe religious funeral rites, wear a crucifix and perhaps attend a church service two or three times a year but not much more than that). My impression, just by speaking to people (not very scientific, I know!) is that many believe in God in an abstract way; that is, if asked, they would say that He probably exists but are otherwise not very interested in His nature or our relationship with Him.

In my view, only 20% – 25% of Christian Russians are really religious, by which I mean praying and going to services regularly, making an effort to observe the important church rules on things like confession and Great Lent, and trying to learn about the creed of the church. My observation is that the religious Russians tend to be people in their 40s and older.

With Muslims, I would say that most Russian Muslims are also “culturally” religious but the percentage of religious Muslims is higher than that of religious Christians (perhaps 30% to 40%). However, it’s more difficult to estimate because Muslims are more likely to observe many of the outward practices of their religion (eg., diet, abstinence from alcohol, dress, prayer, fasting etc.) even if they are not very religious. This is probably due to greater social and family pressure to conform, and the fact that many religious practices are much more integrated into the culture and traditions of the Muslim ethnic groups in Russia.

The Saker: The two big “heavyweight” religions in Russia are Orthodox Christianity and Islam. How would you compare them in terms of appeal, outreach policies, etc. How are these two in terms of growth, especially compared to the other religions found in Russia?

Edik: I can only comment briefly on this as I haven’t made a detailed study of the subject beyond what I read in the media. My general observations are below.

- Both Orthodox Christianity and Islam have positioned themselves as integral components of the Russian national identity, be that ethnic Russian identity (Orthodoxy) or Turkic/Caucasus (Islam), and have been fairly successful. This, however, inflates the number of believers as it counts people who are only nominally religious and may not give an accurate picture of the true strength of these religions.
- There seem to be more religious Muslims than Orthodox Christians and they seem to be growing at a faster rate. This is probably due to a higher Muslim birthrate and immigration from Central Asia. In addition, Muslim political and religious leaders seem to be more forthright about efforts to encourage religiosity (and ordinary Muslims seem to be more receptive to these efforts as well). In Chechnya, for example, the local government tacitly allows (some would say encourages) initiatives to compel people and businesses to observe Sharia and the Federal authorities generally turn a blind eye to this. I couldn’t

imagine anything similar on the same scale for Christians; and if attempted, would probably run into opposition.

- Orthodox Christianity operates under a few disadvantages: sustained persecution during Soviet times which was aimed primarily at Christians (and resulted in many Russians being ignorant of, and uninterested in, Christianity); modern secularism; and competition from other Christian denominations like Catholics, Baptists, Evangelicals, etc.. I don't see a comparable phenomenon among Muslims.

As to Judaism and Buddhism – I don't know enough about them to compare with Orthodoxy and Islam. The only observation I would make (on Judaism) is that the religious Jewish presence in Moscow has become much more open and noticeable in the last 10 to 15 years, particularly of orthodox/Hasidic Jews.

The Saker: Again, about the two “heavyweights” – in your personal observations, what is the relationship of Orthodox Christianity and Islam towards the secular leaders (the Kremlin) and how much support, if any, do these religions get from the Russian state? How much influence, if any, does Orthodox Christianity and Islam, have over the Kremlin and its policies?

Edik: The Kremlin is very supportive of both religions and they reciprocate. It's a mutually beneficial relationship. As in the case of the previous question, I've not made a detailed study of the relationship between these religions and the Kremlin so can only comment on the basis of what I've read in the media.

- The Kremlin publicly displays support for Orthodox Christianity, Islam and Judaism, first by designating them as “traditional religions” of Russia. Secondly, leading politicians (particularly President Putin) make a point of being seen in public with their religious leaders, make supportive public statements and attend religious services on important occasions like Christmas and Easter. President Putin has made it well known that he is a religious Orthodox Christian. All these things confer official approval and legitimacy on these religions. By default, any other religion which is not recognised in the same way is on the margins and likely to be viewed as being “not really Russian” at best, or some sort of weird sect at worst, by many ordinary Russians.
- The government does use the law to show its support for the main religions in selected cases. For example, it has supported laws that appeal to conservative

Orthodox Christians and Muslims, like the “blasphemy law” (which makes it an offence to “act in a way intended to insult the religious feelings of believers”) or the “anti-gay propaganda law”. The authorities have also taken action to ban or restrict a few non-mainstream religious groups (the most recent example being the banning of the Jehovah’s Witnesses on the grounds of extremism).

- In the past 5 years, there has been a sharp increase in the construction of new churches and restoration of existing churches in central Moscow. The largest mosque in Europe was built in central Moscow a few years ago. Since these types of projects, in the centre of the capital, involve planning permission and other permits, and are difficult to carry out, they would probably not take place without government endorsement.

However, I also think that the ability of religious leaders to “influence” the Kremlin is limited. It’s true that the government considers it important to have the main religions “on side” but so far, the actions taken to demonstrate support for Orthodox Christianity and Islam have been quite measured and entirely justifiable in terms of realpolitik. I doubt that the government would be willing to go beyond what it has already done, even if religious leaders push for it, as that would start to rub against the many Russians who are non-religious, secular (even atheist) and liberal, and generate more support for the political opposition. I also question whether ordinary Russian Christians or Muslims really want the promotion of religion to go much beyond what has already been done, given that (as I mentioned above), most people are still only nominally observant and treat religion largely as a cultural affiliation.

The Saker: Russian patriots often say that the collective West (mainly the USA), is sending preachers to Russia under the guise of religion but that these people, in reality, are agents of influence. The example of Turchinov in the Ukraine is probably the best known one. Russians are also deeply suspicious of “sects”. As a Quaker living in Russia, would you say that these accusations are founded? Are you sometimes viewed with suspicion because you are a Quaker?

Edik: I think that this view of western preachers is a bit exaggerated. My impression is that preachers are, by and large, motivated by a genuine desire to bring their religious message to Russians rather than any other ulterior motive. The problem is that some denominations, especially those from the US, also have clear political biases which colour the spiritual message of the preacher. I don’t think that this is intentional or calculated on the part of the preacher though, it’s just baked into his

message. I'm also sceptical about the extent to which these preachers are able to influence the way that Russians think. It might have been the case in the early/mid 1990s, when most Russians had a very naïve view of the west and western societies, and were still reeling from the collapse of the USSR. Now, Russians are a lot better informed, the west is itself in the throes of crisis, Russia and Russians are better off, and this means that Russians are less likely to blindly accept whatever a preacher says on non-religious issues. Also, as you say, Russians are suspicious of "sects", which further operates to counter the impact of western preachers.

To be fair, there are also western pastors, preachers and religious bloggers who respect Russia and its people, and work for understanding of Russia in the west.

If anything, I think that the western and Russian liberal mass media are far more important as agents of influence than preachers. People go to the mass media for information on politics and society, and have their views on these matters shaped by mass media. With regard to Turchinov, I would simply say that his behaviour reflects on the sort of person he is, rather than his religion. There are bad people who claim to be men of faith in every country. The fact that he is a Baptist lay preacher is only incidental in my opinion.

As for Quakers specifically, I think our situation is very different because we don't proselytize and our numbers are tiny. The Russians who are Quakerism have sought us out of their own accord because they found out about us and some of our beliefs – for example, pacifism – appealed to them. I can't say that I've ever been viewed with suspicion by Russians for being a Quaker. Russians take it for granted that I, as a foreigner, have a different religion so it's no big deal. I don't speak about my beliefs unless someone asks me about them, so no-one thinks that I'm trying to preach to or convert them.

The Saker: how do you see the future of religion in Russia? (open ended question, please reply with your best guess)

Edik: I'll answer this very briefly as I'm terrible at predictions!

- I think that, in Russia, as in many other parts of the world, there are strong trends which hinder the growth of faith (subject to the caveat below). Materialism is one and social media is another. The nature of modern society forces most people to spend a lot of time on material concerns like career and

money, and then we are bombarded constantly by images and messages promoting consumption. This crowds out the time for religious or spiritual introspection. Social media, which is extremely popular in Russia especially among younger Russians, tends to encourage shallow self-obsession, which is again quite inimical to faith. So long as these trends remain powerful in Russia, I think a genuine religious upsurge will be difficult.

- It's possible that some people will become disillusioned with materialism and turn towards religion. That can already be seen in some Asian countries where the "thrill" of acquiring money and things has passed, and people are left with the stress of trying to maintain their standard of living and material expectations. However, in these countries, it's the US-style Pentecostal and charismatic churches that have benefited. This may be more difficult in Russia because of the official support which the "traditional religions" currently enjoy but I think that the Orthodox church, in particular, will have to do more than just rely on the instruments of state authority if these foreign churches start gaining popularity – the nature of faith being that persecution has rarely, if ever, deterred people from following a religion.
- Church leaders also need to ask themselves difficult questions about the role of the Church and its spiritual relevance to modern society and engagement with young people; as well as its relationship to political power. If the Church is perceived as another arm of the state, it will compromise its moral legitimacy and could eventually drive believers away. Should this happen, other Christian denominations or religions could be the beneficiaries.

In short, I don't anticipate a big upsurge in genuine religious belief in Russia. There are issues which I think the Russian Church needs to face but doesn't appear to be doing (possibly because the current situation suits the Church hierarchy very nicely). Unfortunately, these are issues that could, in future, have a negative effect on its standing and appeal. This assumes, of course, that we don't experience a major crisis or calamity of some sort which shakes the people's belief in the status quo, and drives them back to religious faith.

Edik is originally from South-east Asia and lived in Europe and the United States. He never expected that he would end up settling down in Russia but has now lived there for almost half his life and thinks of it as home.

The Saker interviews A.B. Abrams about the geostrategic developments in Asia

June 26, 2019

I recently received a copy of a most interesting book, A.B. Abrams' "[Power and Primacy: the history of western intervention in Asia](#)" and as soon as I started reading it I decided that I wanted to interview the author and ask him about what is taking place in Asia in our times. This was especially interesting to me since Putin has embarked on the Russian version of Obama's "[pivot to Asia](#)", with the big difference that Putin's pivot has already proven to be a fantastic success, whereas Obama's was a [dismal failure](#). I am most grateful to A.B. Abrams for his time and expertise.

The Saker

The Saker: Please introduce yourself and your past and present political activities (books, articles, memberships, etc.)

A.B. Abrams: I am an expert on the international relations, recent history and geopolitics of the Asia-Pacific region. I have published widely on defense and politics related subjects under various pseudonyms. I am proficient in Chinese, Korean and other regional languages.

I wrote this book with the purpose of elucidating the nature of Western intervention in the region over the past 75 years, and analyzing prominent trends in the West's involvement in the Asia-Pacific from the Pacific War with Imperial Japan to the current conflicts with China and North Korea. I attempt to show that Western conduct towards populations in the region, the designs of the Western powers for the region, and the means by which these have been pursued, have remained consistent over these past decades. This context is critical to understanding the present and future nature of Western intervention in the Asia-Pacific.

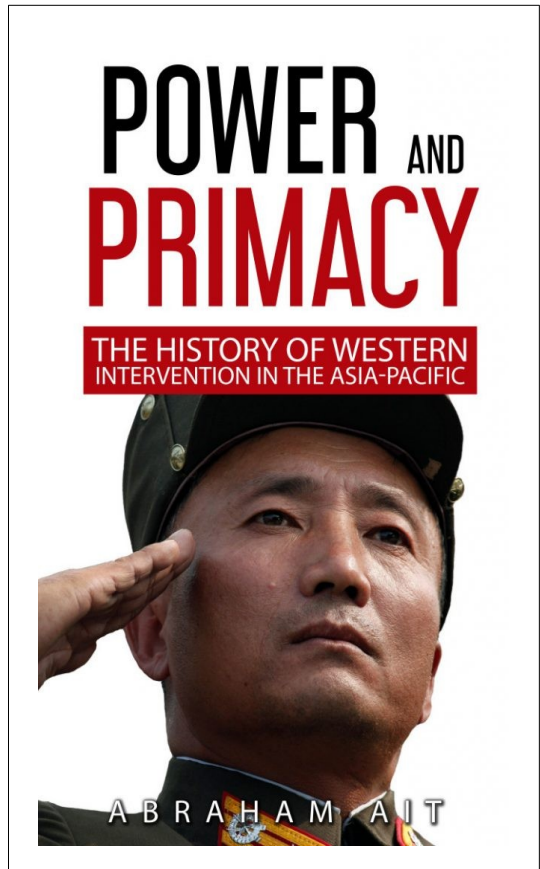
The Saker: You have recently published a most interesting book "*Power and Primacy: the history of western interventions in Asia*" (<https://www.peterlang.com/view/title/68124>) which is a "must read" for anybody interested in Asia-western relations. You included a chapter on "The Russian Factor in the Asia-Pacific". Historically, there is no doubt that pre-1917 Russia was seen in Asia as a "Western"

power. But is that still true today? Many observers speak of a Russian “pivot” to Asia. What is your take on that? Is Russia still perceived as a “Western power” in Asia or is that changing?

A.B. Abrams: In the introduction to this work I highlight that a fundamental shift in world order was facilitated by the modernization and industrialization of two Eastern nations – Japan under the Meiji Restoration and the USSR under the Stalinist industrialization program. Before these two events the West had retained an effective monopoly on the modern industrial economy and on modern military force. Russia’s image is still affected by the legacy of the Soviet Union – in particular the way Soviet proliferation of both modern industries and modern weapons across much of the region was key to containing Western ambitions in the Cold War. Post-Soviet Russia has a somewhat unique position – with a cultural heritage influenced by Mongolia and Central Asia as well as by Europe. Politically Russia remains distinct from the

Western Bloc, and perceptions of the country in East Asia have been heavily influenced by this. Perhaps today one the greatest distinctions is Russia’s supporting of the principle of sovereignty under international law and its adherence to a non-interventionist foreign policy. Where for example the U.S., Europe and Canada will attempt to intervene in the internal affairs of other parties – whether by [cutting off parts for armaments](#), [imposing economic sanctions](#) or even launching military interventions under humanitarian pretexts – Russia lacks a history of such behavior which has made it a welcome presence even for traditionally Western aligned nations such as the Philippines, Indonesia and South Korea.

While the Western Bloc attempted to isolate the USSR from East and Southeast Asia by supporting the spread of anticommunist thought, this pretext for shunning



Russia collapsed in 1991. Today the West has had to resort to other means to attempt to contain and demonize the country – whether labelling it a human rights abuser or threatening its economic and defense partners with sanctions and other repercussions. The success of these measures in the Asia-Pacific has varied – but as regional economies have come to rely less on the West for trade and grown increasingly interdependent Western leverage over them and their foreign policies has diminished.

Even when considered as a Western nation, the type of conservative Western civilization which Russia may be seen to represent today differs starkly from that of Western Europe and North America. Regarding a Russia Pivot to Asia, support for such a plan appears to have increased from 2014 when relations with the Western Bloc effectively broke down. Indeed, the Russia's future as a pacific power could be a very bright one – and as part of the up and coming northeast Asian region it borders many of the economies which appear set to dominate in the 21st century – namely China, Japan and the Koreas. Peter the Great is known to have issued in a new era of Russian prosperity by recognizing the importance of Europe's rise and redefining Russia as a European power – moving the capital to St Petersburg. Today a similar though perhaps less extreme pivot Eastwards towards friendlier and more prosperous nations may be key to Russia's future.

The Saker: We hear many observers speak of an informal but very profound and even game-changing partnership between Putin's Russia and Xi's China. The Chinese even speak of a “*strategic comprehensive partnership of coordination for the new era*“. How would you characterize the current relationship between these two countries and what prospects do you see for a future Russian-Chinese partnership?

A.B. Abrams: A Sino-Russian alliance has long been seen in both the U.S. and in Europe as one of the greatest threats to the West's global primacy and to Western-led world order. As early as 1951 U.S. negotiators meeting with Chinese delegations to end the Korean War were instructed to focus on the differences in the positions of Moscow and Beijing in an attempt to form a rift between the two. Close Sino-Soviet cooperation seriously stifled Western designs for the Korean Peninsula and the wider region during that period, and it was repeatedly emphasized that the key to a Western victory was to bring about a Sino-Soviet split. Achieving this goal by the early 1960s and bringing the two powers very near to a total conflict significantly increased prospects for a Western victory in the Cold War, with the end of the previously united

front seriously undermining nationalist and leftist movements opposing Western designs from Africa and the Middle East to Vietnam and Korea. Both states learned the true consequences of this in the late 1980s and early 1990s when there was a real risk of total collapse under Western pressure. Attempts to bring an end to China's national revolution through destabilization failed in 1989, although the USSR was less fortunate and the results for the Russian population in the following decade were grave indeed.

Today the Sino-Russian partnership has become truly comprehensive, and while Western experts from Henry Kissinger to the late Zbigniew Brzezinski among others have emphasized the importance of bringing about a new split in this partnership this strategy remains unlikely to work a second time. Both Beijing and Moscow learned from the dark period of the post-Cold War years that the closer they are together the safer they will be, and that any rift between them will only provide their adversaries with the key to bringing about their downfall. It is difficult to comprehend the importance of the Sino-Russian partnership for the security of both states without understanding the enormity of the Western threat – with maximum pressure being exerted on multiple fronts from finance and information to military and cyberspace. Where in the early 1950s it was only the Soviet nuclear deterrent which kept both states safe from very real Western plans for massive nuclear attacks, so too today is the synergy in the respective strengths of China and Russia key to protecting the sovereignty and security of the two nations from a very real and imminent threat. A few examples of the nature of this threat include growing investments in social engineering through social media – the results of have been seen in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Ukraine, a lowering threshold for nuclear weapons use by the United States – which it currently trains Western allies outside the NPT to deploy, and even reports from Russian and Korean sources of investments in biological warfare – reportedly being tested in [Georgia](#), [Eastern Europe](#) and [South Korea](#).

The partnership between Russia and China has become truly comprehensive, and is perhaps best exemplified by their military relations. From 2016 joint military exercises have involved the [sharing of extremely sensitive information](#) on missile and early warning systems – one of the most well kept defense secrets of any nuclear power which even NATO powers do not share with one another. Russia's defense sector has played a key role in the modernization of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, while Chinese investment has been essential to allowing Russia to continue research and development on next generation systems needed to retain parity with the United

States. There is reportedly cooperation between the two in developing next generation weapons technologies for systems such as hypersonic cruise and anti aircraft missiles and new strategic bombers and fighter jets which both states plan to field by the mid-2020s. With the combined defense spending of both states a small fraction of that of the Western powers, which themselves cooperate closely in next generation defense projects, it is logical that the two should pool their resources and research and development efforts to most efficiently advance their own security.

Cooperation in political affairs has also been considerable, and the two parties have effectively presented a united front against the designs of the Western Bloc. In 2017 both issued strong warnings to the United States and its allies that they would not tolerate an invasion of North Korea – which was followed by the [deployment of advanced air defense systems](#) by both states near the Korean border with coverage of much of the peninsula's airspace. Following Pyongyang's testing of its [first nuclear delivery system capable of reaching the United States](#), and renewed American threats against the East Asian country, China and Russia staged near simultaneous [exercises](#) near the peninsula using naval and marine units in a clear warning to the U.S. against military intervention. China's Navy has on several occasions deployed to the Mediterranean for joint drills with Russian forces – each time following a period of high tension with the Western Bloc over Syria.

In April 2018, a period of particularly high tensions between Russia and the Western Bloc over Western threats both to take military action against the Syrian government and to retaliate for an alleged but unproven Russian chemical weapons attack on British soil, the Chinese Defense Minister Wei Fenghe traveled to Russia and more explicitly stated that the Sino-Russian partnership was aimed at countering Western designs. Referring to the Sino-Russian defense partnership as “as stable as Mount Tai” [he stated](#): “the Chinese side has come to show Americans the close ties between the Armed Forces of China and Russia, especially in this situation. We have come to support you.” A week later China [announced large-scale live fire naval drills](#) in the Taiwan Strait – which according to several analysts were scheduled to coincide with a buildup of Western forces near Syria. Presenting a potential second front was key to deterring the Western powers from taking further action against Russia or its ally Syria. These are but a few examples Sino-Russian cooperation, which is set to grow only closer with time.

The Saker: The USA remains the most formidable military power in Asia, but this military power is being eroded as a result of severe miscalculations of the US political leadership. How serious a crisis do you think the US is now facing in Asia and how do you assess the risks of a military confrontation between the USA and the various Asian powers (China, the Philippines, the DPRK, etc.).

A.B. Abrams: Firstly I would dispute that the United States is the most formidable military power in the region, as while it does retain a massive arsenal there are several indicators that it lost this position to China during the 2010s. Looking at combat readiness levels, the average age of weapons in their inventories, morale both publicly and in the armed forces, and most importantly the correlation of their forces, China appears to have an advantage should war break out in the Asia-Pacific. It is important to remember that the for the United States and its European allies in particular wars aren't fought on a chessboard. Only a small fraction of their military might can be deployed to the Asia-Pacific within a month of a conflict breaking out, while over 95% of Chinese forces are already on the region and are trained and armed almost exclusively for war in the conditions of the Asia-Pacific. In real terms the balance of military power regionally is in China's favor, and although the U.S. has tried to counter this with a military 'Pivot to Asia' initiative from 2011 this has ultimately failed due to both the drag from defense commitments elsewhere and the unexpected and pace at which China has expanded and modernized its armed forces.

For the time being the risk of direct military confrontation remains low, and while there was a risk in 2017 of American and allied action against the DPRK Pyongyang has effectively taken this option off the table with the development of a viable and growing arsenal of thermonuclear weapons and associated delivery systems alongside the modernization of its conventional capabilities. While the U.S. may have attempted to call a Chinese and Russian bluff by launching a limited strike – which seriously risked spiraling into something much larger – it is for the benefit of all regional parties including South Korea that the DPRK now has the ability to deter the United States without relying on external support. This was a historically unprecedented event, and as military technology has evolved it has allowed a small power for the first time to deter a superpower without relying on allied intervention. Changes in military technology such as the proliferation of the nuclear tipped ICBM make a shooting war less likely, but also alters the nature of warfare to place greater emphasis on information war, economic war and other new fields which will increasingly decide the global balance of power. Where America's answer to the resistance of China and

North Korea in the 1950s to douse them with napalm, today winning over their populations through soft power, promoting internal dissent, placing pressure on their living standards and ensuring continued Western dominance of key technologies has become the new means of fighting.

That being said, there is a major threat of conflict in the Asia-Pacific of a different nature. Several organizations including the United Nations and the defense ministries of Russia, Singapore and Indonesia among others have warned of the dangers posed by Islamic terrorism to stability in the region. Radical Islamism, as most recently [attested to by Saudi Arabia's crown prince](#), played a key role in allowing the Western Bloc to cement its dominance over the Middle East and North Africa – undermining Russian and Soviet aligned governments including Algeria, Libya, Egypt and Syria – in most cases with direct Western support. CIA Deputy Director Graham Fuller in this respect referred to the agency's "policy of guiding the evolution of Islam and of helping them against our adversaries." Several officials, from the higher brass of the Russian, Syrian and Iranian militaries to the [former President of Afghanistan](#) and the [President of Turkey](#), have all alleged Western support for radical terror groups including the Islamic State for the sake of destabilizing their adversaries. As the Asia-Pacific has increasingly slipped out of the Western sphere of influence, it is likely that this asset will increasingly be put into play. The consequences of the spread of jihadism from the Middle East have been relatively limited until now, but growing signs of danger can be seen in Xinjiang, Myanmar, the Philippines and Indonesia. It is this less direct means of waging war which arguably poses the greatest threat.

The Saker: Do you think that we will see the day when US forces will have to leave South Korean, Japan or Taiwan?

A.B. Abrams: Other than a limited contingent of Marines [recently deployed to guard the American Institute](#), U.S. forces are not currently stationed in Taiwan. The massive force deployed there in the 1950s was scaled down and American nuclear weapons removed in 1974 in response to China's acceptance of an alliance with the United States against the Soviet Union. Taiwan's military situation is highly precarious and the disparity in its strength relative to the Chinese mainland grows considerably by the year. Even a large American military presence is unlikely to change this – and just 130km from the Chinese mainland they would be extremely vulnerable and could be quickly isolated from external support in the event of a cross straits war. We could, however, see a small American contingent deployed as a 'trigger wire' – which will

effectively send a signal to Beijing that the territory is under American protection and that an attempt to recapture Taiwan will involve the United States. Given trends in public opinion in Taiwan, and the very considerable pro-Western sentiments among the younger generations in particular, it is likely that Taipei will look to a greater rather than a lesser Western military presence on its soil in future.

Japan and particularly South Korea see more nuanced public opinion towards the U.S., and negative perceptions of an American military presence may well grow in future – though for different reasons in each country. Elected officials alone, however, are insufficient to move the American presence – as best demonstrated by the short tenure of Prime Minister Hatoyama in Japan and the frustration of President Moon’s efforts to restrict American deployments of [THAAD missile systems](#) in his first year. It would take a massive mobilization of public opinion – backed by business interests and perhaps the military – to force such a change. This remains possible however, particularly as both economies grow increasingly reliant on China for trade and as the U.S. is seen to have acted increasingly erratically in response to challenges from Beijing and Pyongyang which has undermined its credibility. As to a voluntary withdrawal by the United States, this remains extremely unlikely. President Donald Trump ran as one of the most non-interventionist candidates in recent history, but even under him and with considerable public support prospects for a significant reduction in the American presence, much less a complete withdrawal, have remained slim.

The Saker: Some circles in Russia are trying very hard to frighten the Russian public opinion against China alleging things like “China want to loot (or even conquer!) Siberia”, “China will built up its military and attack Russia” or “China with its huge economy will simply absorb small Russia”. In your opinion are any of these fears founded and, if yes, which ones and why?

A.B. Abrams: A growth in Sinophobic sentiment in Russia only serves to weaken the nation and empower its adversaries by potentially threatening its relations with its most critical strategic partner. The same is applicable vice-versa regarding Russophobia in China. Given the somewhat Europhilic nature of the Russian state in a number of periods, including in the 1990s, and the considerable European soft influences in modern Russia, there are grounds for building up of such sentiment. Indeed Radio Free Europe, a U.S. government funded nonprofit broadcasting corporation with the stated purpose of “advancing the goals of U.S. foreign policy,”

notably published sinophobic content aimed at [depicting the Russian people as victims of Chinese business interests](#) to coincide with the Putin-XI summit in June 2019. However, an understanding of the modern Chinese state and its interests indicates that it does not pose a threat to Russia – and to the contrary is vital to Russia’s national security interests. While Russia historically has cultural ties to the Western nations, the West has shown Russia considerable hostility throughout its recent history – as perhaps is most evident in the 1990s when Russia briefly submitted itself and sought to become part of the Western led order with terrible consequences. China by contrast has historically conducted statecraft based on the concept of a civilization state – under which its strength is not measured by the weakness and subjugation of others but by its internal achievements. A powerful and independent Russia capable of protecting a genuine rules based world order and holding lawless actors in check is strongly in the Chinese interest. It is clear that in Russia such an understanding exists on a state level, although there is no doubt that there will be efforts by external parties to turn public opinion against China to the detriment of the interests of both states.

The idea that China would seek to economically subjugate Russia, much less invade it, is ludicrous. It was from Europe were the major invasions of Russian territory came – vast European coalitions led by France and Germany respectively with a third American led attack planned and prepared for but stalled by the Soviet acquisition of a nuclear deterrent. More recently from the West came sanctions, the austerity program of the 1990s, the militarization of Eastern Europe, and the demonization of the Russian nation – all intended to subjugate and if possible shatter it. Even at the height of its power, China did not colonize the Koreans, Vietnamese or Japanese nor did it seek to conquer Central Asia. Assuming China will have the same goals and interests as a Western state would if they were in a similar position of strength is to ignore the lessons of history, and the nature of the Chinese national character and national interest.

The Saker: The Russian military is currently vastly more capable (even if numerically much smaller) than the Chinese. Does anybody in China see a military threat from Russia?

A.B. Abrams: There may be marginalized extreme nationalists in China who see a national security from almost everybody, but in mainstream discourse there are no such perceptions. To the contrary, Russia’s immense contribution to Chinese security

is widely recognized – not only in terms of technological transfers but also in terms of the value of the joint front the two powers have formed. Russia not only lacks a history of annexing East Asian countries or projecting force against them, but it is also heavily reliant on China in particular both to keep its defense sector active and to undermine Western attempts to isolate it. Russian aggression against China is unthinkable for Moscow – even if China did not possess its current military strength and nuclear deterrence capabilities. This is something widely understood in China and elsewhere.

I would dispute that Russia's military is vastly more capable than China's own, as other than nuclear weapons there is a similar level of capabilities in most sectors in both countries. While Russia has a lead in many key technologies such as hypersonic missiles, air defenses and submarines to name a few prominent examples, China has been able to purchase and integrate many of these into its own armed forces alongside the products of its own defense sector. Russia's most prominent fighter jet for example, the Flanker (in all derivatives from Su-27 to J-11D), is in fact fielded in larger numbers by China than by Russia itself – and those in Chinese service have access to both indigenous as well as Russian munitions and subsystems. Furthermore, there are some less critical but still significant sectors where China does appear to retain a lead – for example it deployed combat jets equipped with a new generation of active electronically scanned array radars and air to air missiles from 2017 (J-20 and in [2018 J-10C](#)) – while Russia has only done so this in July 2019 with the [induction](#) of the MiG-35. Whether this is due to a Chinese technological advantage, or to a greater availability of funds to deploy its new technologies faster, remains uncertain. Russia's ability to provide China with its most vital technologies, and China's willingness to rely so heavily on Russian technology to comprise so much of its inventory, demonstrates the level of trust between the two countries

The Saker: Do you think that China could become a military threat to other countries in the region (especially Taiwan, India, Vietnam, the Philippines, etc.)?

A.B. Abrams: I would direct you to a quote by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Bin Mohamed from March this year. He stated: “we always say, we have had China as a neighbor for 2,000 years, we were never conquered by them. But the Europeans came in 1509, in two years, they conquered Malaysia.” This coming from a nationalist leader considered one of the most sinophobic in Southeast Asia, whose country has an ongoing territorial dispute with China in the South China Sea, bears testament to the nature of claims of a Chinese threat. It is critical not to make the mistake of imposing

Western norms when trying to understand Chinese statecraft. Unlike the European states, China is not and has never been dependent on conquering others to enrich itself – but rather was a civilization state which measured its wealth by what it could its own people could produce. A harmonious relationship with India, Vietnam, the Philippines and others in which all states' sovereign and territorial integrity is respected is in the Chinese interest.

A second aspect which must be considered, and which bears testament to China's intentions, is the orientation of the country's armed forces. While the militaries of the United States and European powers such as Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium and France among others are heavily skewed to prioritize power projection overseas, China's military has made disproportionately small investments in power projection and is overwhelmingly tailored to territorial defense. While the United States has over 300 tanker aircraft deigned to refuel its combat jets midair and attack faraway lands, China has just three purpose-built tankers – less than Malaysia, Chile or Pakistan. The [ratio of logistical to combat units](#) further indicates that China's armed forces, in stark contrast to the Western powers, are heavily oriented towards defense and fighting near their borders.

This all being said, China does pose an imminent threat to the government in Taipei – although I would disagree with your categorization of Taiwan as a country. Officially the Republic of China (ROC- as opposed to the Beijing based People's Republic of China), Taipei has not declared itself a separate country but rather the rightful government of the entire Chinese nation. Taipei remains technically at war with the mainland, a conflict would have ended in 1950 if the U.S. had not placed the ROC under its protection. The fast growing strength of the mainland has shifted the balance of power dramatically should the conflict again break out into open hostilities. China has only to gain from playing the long game with Taiwan however – providing scholarships and jobs for its people to live on the mainland and thus undermining the demonization of the country and hostility towards a peaceful reunification. Taiwan's economic reliance on the mainland has also grown considerably, and these softer methods of bridging the gaps between the ROC and the mainland are key to facilitating unification. Meanwhile the military balance in the Taiwan Strait only grows more favorable for Beijing by the year – meaning there is no urgency to take military action. While China will insist on unification, it will seek to avoid doing so violently unless provoked.

The Saker: In conclusion: where in Asia do you see the next major conflict take place and why?

A.B. Abrams: The conflict in the Asia-Pacific is ongoing, but the nature of conflict has changed. We see an ongoing and so far highly successful de-radicalization effort in Xinjiang – which was taken in direct response to Western attempts to [turn the province into ‘China’s Syria or China’s Libya,’](#) in the words of Chinese state media, using similar means. We see a harsh [Western response](#) to the Made in China 2025 initiative under which the country has sought to compete in key technological fields formerly monopolized by the Western Bloc and Japan – and the result of this will have a considerable impact on the balance of economic power in the coming years. We see direct economic warfare and technological competition between China and the United States – although the latter has so far refrained from escalating too far due to the potentially devastating impact reprisals could have. We further see an information war in full swing, with Sinophobic stories often citing ‘anonymous sources’ being propagated by Western media to target not only their own populations – but also to influence public opinion in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. Influence over third parties remains vital to isolating China and cementing the Western sphere of influence. Use of social media and social engineering, as the events of the past decade have demonstrated from the Middle East in 2011 to Hong Kong today, remains key and will only grow in its potency in the coming years. We also see a major arms race, with the Western Bloc investing heavily in an all new generation of weapons designed to leave existing Chinese and allied defenses obsolete – from laser air defenses to neutralize China’s nuclear deterrent to sixth generation stealth fighters, new heavy bombers, new applications of artificial intelligence technologies and new hypersonic missiles.

All these are fronts of the major conflict currently underway, and the Obama and Trump administrations have stepped up their offensives to bring about a new ‘end of history’ much like that of the 1990s – only this time it is likely to be permanent. To prevail, China and Russia will need to cooperate at least as closely if not more so as the Western powers do among themselves.

The Saker: thank you very much for your time and answers!

Debunking the rumors about Russia caving in to Israel

July 03, 2019

This Spring saw a sudden increase in the volume of articles in the so-called “alternative media and blogosphere” about Putin “selling out” Syria or Iran to the Israelis and their US patrons, or both. What was particularly interesting about this campaign is that it was not triggered by any kind of event or statement by Putin or any other senior Russian decision-makers. True, Israeli politicians made numerous trips to Russia, but each time they walked away without anything tangible to show for their efforts. As for their Russian counterparts, they limited themselves to vague and well-intentioned statements. Nonetheless, the “Putin sold out to Netanyahu” campaign did not stop. Every meeting was systematically interpreted as The Clear Proof that the Zionists control the Kremlin and that Putin was doing Netanyahu’s bidding. The fact that this campaign began *ex nihilo* did not seem to bother most observers. Soon I started getting steady streams of emails asking me to react to these articles. My reply was always the same one: let’s do the opposite of what these supposed “specialists” are doing and wait for the facts to come out and only then form an opinion.

Truth be told, I had already tackled that canard in my article [“Why is Putin allowing” Israel to bomb Syria.](#) I also had tried to debunk some of the most persistent and toxic falsehoods about Russia and Israel in my article [“Putin and Israel: A Complex and Multi-Layered Relationship.”](#) I also wrote an article entitled [“Is Putin Really Ready to “Ditch” Iran?”](#) trying to debunk that stupid theory. Finally, I even tried to compare and contrast the Russian approach towards Israel (which I qualified as “self-interest”) with the attitude of the “collective West” (which I qualified as “prostitution”) in an article entitled [“Russia, Israel and the Values of “Western Civilization” – Where Is the Truth?”](#).

I was naïve to think that any of my arguments would elicit any doubts amongst the “Putin is a traitor” crowd. After all, if being wrong for years could not convince them otherwise, no rational argument would.

Then, news agencies began to report that General Nikolai Patrushev, the Director of the Russian Federal Security Service and the Secretary of the Security Council of Russia, would travel to Israel to meet with John Bolton and Bibi Netanyahu. At this point, the steady stream of concerned emails suddenly turned into a deluge! After all,

why would such a high-ranking (and rather secretive) Russian official travel to Israel to meet two of the worst and most evil politicians of the Anglo-Zionist Empire? Surely, he had something important to say, no? The consensus (of sorts) was that Patrushev would sell out Iran and Syria in exchange for some (entirely theoretical, quite unlikely and inevitably vague) “concessions” on the Ukraine, Crimea or sanctions.

My reply remained the same. Let’s wait until these folks actually meet and let’s see if their meeting brings about something significant (as a rule, I find getting facts an essential first step before engaging in any analysis; apparently, my detractors feel otherwise).

So, again, I decided to wait.

Then something weird happened: the meeting took place, it was even reported (albeit mostly in general terms), the participants issued their statements and... .. nothing. The outcome of the “Jerusalem summit” was greeted by a deafening silence and a few vapid commentaries. My first hunch was that, as the Russian saying goes, the “mountain had given birth to a mouse” and that nothing of importance came out of the summit. Boy, was I ever wrong!

The official Russian position on Iran

The summit *did* indeed produce something of vital significance, but for some reason, the most senior-official statement on Iran that any Russian decision-maker ever made received very little attention. Unless you happened to be a Saker blog reader, you would never find out about it.

See for yourself and click here: <http://thesaker.is/russias-patrushev-holds-press-conference-following-russia-us-israeli-talks/> for both the video and the transcript.

To my knowledge, this is the only full-length English language transcript of Patrushev’s statement. (Ruptly posted a video dubbed in English, but it was hardly noticed. As for the transcript, to my knowledge it was never reposted in full).

Which is too bad, since the following words have now been spoken by one of the most authorized and high-ranking Russian officials to date: (emphasis added)

*“We have emphasized an importance of easing of the tensions for the country (Syria) between Israel and Iran, by the way of implementation the mutual approaching steps. **We have made an emphasis that Syria must not be***

turned into an arena for geopolitical confrontation. We have also highlighted the need for the international community to help Syria to rebuild its national economy. Among other things, Syria should be free of illegal trade restrictions, unilateral sanctions, as well as sanctions on economic operators that help Syria to rebuild. They also have to be free from all sanctions.

We also turned everyone's attention to the relations of Syria and other Arab states that should be normalized again. Syria is once again should be a full-fledged member of the Arab League. Also, we pointed out an importance of establishing the contacts of Syrian government with its Kurdish ethnic minority. We stated of importance to unite the efforts to eliminate all remaining in Syria terrorists. We called for immediate disruption of all channels through which terrorists might be able to obtain weapon grade chemical materials and their precursors.

Russia, the United States and Israel should join their efforts to help peace to return to Syria.

*In the context of the statements made by our partners with regard to a major regional power, namely Iran, I would like to say the following: **Iran has always been and remains our ally and partner**, with which we are consistently developing relations both on bilateral basis and within multilateral formats,*

*This is why we believe that **it is inadmissible to describe Iran as the major threat to the regional security and, moreover, to put it on par with the Islamic State or any other terrorist organization**, Especially, since Iran contributes substantial efforts to bring peace to Syria and to stabilize the situation in Syria.*

We have called on our partners to show restraint and readiness for reciprocal steps, which must serve as the basis for the consistent advancement towards the easing of tensions in the Israeli-Iranian relations”

To my knowledge, this is the very first time that Russia has officially declared Iran not only as a partner but as an ally! A few days later, President Putin confirmed that this was an official position which had his *imprimatur* when he stated in [his interview to the FT](#) that:

“We have established sufficiently good business-like relations with all regional countries, and our positions in the Middle East region have become more stable. Indeed, we have established very good, business-like, partner-like and largely allied relations with many regional countries, including Iran, Turkey and other countries”

This is absolutely huge, especially considering that, unlike Eltsin’s “democratic” Russia or western politicians, Putin does not abandon his allies (if anything, he sometimes defends them for too long even when they have been found guilty of dishonorable actions). Let me repeat this:

Russia has declared that Iran is her *ally*.

The official Russian position on Syria

Next, let’s parse the Patrushev statement once again for some specifics about Syria:

1. Israel does not get to impose its will upon Syria. (*“Syria must not be turned into an arena for geopolitical confrontation”*).
2. All sanctions against Syria must be lifted. (*“Syria should be free of illegal trade restrictions, unilateral sanctions, as well as sanctions on economic operators that help Syria to rebuild. They also have to be free from all sanctions”*).
3. The Arab League must fully reinstate Syria. (*“Syria once again should be a fully-fledged member of the Arab League”*).
4. All the remaining terrorists in Syria must be eliminated. (*“unite the efforts to eliminate all remaining terrorists in Syria”*).

It sure looks to me that Russia’s commitment to Syria’s integrity and freedom is as strong as ever.

Does that look to you like Russia and Israel are working hand-in-hand in Syria?

If so, please read the following for a quick reality check (excerpt from [this article](#)):

The initial AngloZionist plan was to overthrow Assad and replace him with the Takfiri crazies (Daesh, al-Qaeda, al-Nusra, ISIS – call them whatever you want). Doing this would achieve the following goals:

1. Bring down a strong secular Arab state along with its political structure, armed forces, and security services.

2. Create total chaos and horror in Syria justifying the creation of a “security zone” by Israel not only in the Golan but further north.
3. Trigger a civil war in Lebanon by unleashing the Takfiri crazies against Hezbollah.
4. Let the Takfiris and Hezbollah bleed each other to death, then create a “security zone,” but this time in Lebanon.
5. Prevent the creation of a Shia axis Iran-Iraq-Syria-Lebanon.
6. Break up Syria along ethnic and religious lines.
7. Create a Kurdistan which could then be used against Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran.
8. Make it possible for Israel to become the uncontested power broker in the Middle-East and force the KSA, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, and all others to have to go to Israel for any gas or oil pipeline project.
9. Gradually isolate, threaten, subvert, and eventually attack Iran with a broad regional coalition of forces.
10. Eliminate all center of Shia power in the Middle-East.

That was an ambitious plan, but the Israelis felt pretty confident that their US vassal-state would provide the resources needed to achieve it. Now this entire plan has collapsed due to the very high effectiveness of an informal but yet formidable alliance between Russia, Iran, Syria, and Hezbollah. To say that the Israelis are seething with rage and in a state of total panic would be an understatement. Do you think I am exaggerating? Then look at it from the Israeli point of view:

1. The Syrian state has survived, and its armed and security forces are now far more capable than they were before the war started (remember how they *almost* lost the war initially? The Syrians bounced back while learning some very hard lessons. By all reports, they improved tremendously, while at critical moments Iran and Hezbollah were literally “plugging holes” in the Syrian frontlines and “extinguishing fires” on local flashpoints. Now the Syrians are doing a very good job of liberating large chunks of their country, including every single city in Syria).
2. Not only is Syria stronger, but the Iranians and Hezbollah are all over the country now, which is driving the Israelis into a state of panic and rage.
3. Lebanon is rock solid; even the latest Saudi attempt to kidnap Hariri is backfiring.

4. Syria will remain unitary, and Kurdistan is not happening. Millions of displaced refugees are returning home.
5. Israel and the US look like total idiots and, even worse, as losers with no credibility left.

The simple truth is that Russia foiled *ALL* the Israeli plans for Syria. All of them!

This is an extremely important statement. It is also a somewhat ambiguous one since “ally” means different things to different people. The Allied Powers during WWII included the Anglo nations and the Soviet Union, which did not prevent the western powers to plot and conspire to attack and destroy their putative “ally” (who happened to have destroyed about 80% of the Nazi war machine).

[Sidebar: for those who need a reminder of how the West treats its allies, here is a small memento with three examples of how the West planned to “solve the Russian problem”:

- *[Plan Totality](#) (1945): earmarked 20 Soviet cities for obliteration in a first strike: Moscow, Gorki, Kuybyshev, Sverdlovsk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Saratov, Kazan, Leningrad, Baku, Tashkent, Chelyabinsk, Nizhny Tagil, Magnitogorsk, Molotov, Tbilisi, Stalinsk, Grozny, Irkutsk, and Yaroslavl.*
- *[Operation Unthinkable](#) (1945) assumed a surprise attack by up to 47 British and American divisions in the area of Dresden, in the middle of Soviet lines. This represented almost a half of roughly 100 divisions (ca. 2.5 million men) available to the British, American and Canadian headquarters at that time. The majority of any offensive operation would have been undertaken by American and British forces, as well as Polish forces and up to 100,000 German Wehrmacht soldiers.*
- *[Operation Dropshot](#) (1949): included mission profiles that would have used 300 nuclear bombs and 29,000 high-explosive bombs on 200 targets in 100 cities and towns to wipe out 85% of the Soviet Union’s industrial potential at a single stroke. Between 75 and 100 of the 300 nuclear weapons were targeted to destroy Soviet combat aircraft on the ground.*

I could also list all the so-called “allies” the West has ditched, betrayed and even murdered since WWII, but that would take too many pages]

So what does Russia mean exactly when she says that Iran is her “ally”?

Patrushev uses the words партнёр (partner) and союзник (ally). Just as in English, the word “partner” evokes some community of interests and collaboration but is generally value-neutral. This is why Russian politicians sometimes even speak of countries hostile to Russia as “partners.” Not only are they sarcastic, but “partner” does not invoke any particular feeling or moral obligation on anybody’s part. Partner is just a polite word, nothing more.

The word “ally,” however, is a much stronger one which implies not only common interests but also a real, sincere friendship and a common stance against a common enemy. Unless it is used sarcastically, the term “soiuznik” strongly implies a mutual moral obligation.

It remains unclear what that really means in the case of Iran and Russia. Theoretically, having a common enemy attack one of the members of an alliance (“soiuz”) could mean that Russia would intervene and offer military support or even directly intervene herself. I doubt that Patrushev (or anyone else in the Kremlin) has this kind of intervention in mind, if only for one reason which is that there would be very little, if any, popular support for a war against the USA for the sake of Iran. A much more realistic interpretation of Patrushev’s words would be that:

1. Russia will not “sell-out” Iran to anybody in any way, shape or form.
2. If Iran is attacked, Russia will offer her total support ***short of any direct military intervention.***

Total support short of any direct military intervention is what the USSR offered the DPRK and, even more so, to Vietnam, and in both cases, the West was eventually defeated. Also, “short of any direct military intervention” does not mean “no military aid”: sending military equipment and instructors, is also below the threshold of “direct military intervention,” as would be the case with political and economic support. Furthermore, Russia has formidable intelligence and reconnaissance capabilities which could play a crucial role in helping Iran resist an AngloZionist attack (look at what Russian radars, electronic warfare, and battle management systems have done to the effectiveness of US and Israeli attacks against Syria!).

Let's also remember the nature of the Iranian theater of military operations: Iran is a huge country with a very large population (80M+). What this means is that Iran cannot be taken over in a ground invasion. That, in turn, means that the resistance of the Iranian people will never be crushed. And that, in turn, means that there is no need for Russia to prevent a military takeover of Iran. All Russia needs to do is to give Iran the means to effectively resist and the rest will happen naturally (just like Hezbollah did in 2006 against Israel when Iran did not intervene directly and militarily, but simply gave Hezbollah the means to beat back the “only Jewish democracy in the Middle-East”).

Besides, Iranians are fiercely patriotic, and they would probably not welcome any visible Russian military intervention in their country anyway (they won't say “no” to covert aid, especially not the IRGC). This is a wise approach, especially when compared to cowardly little statelets which always want one occupier to boot out a previous occupier (think Poland, the Baltic statelets or the Nazi-occupied Ukraine nowadays).

Finally, Russia is not acting by herself or in a vacuum: the Chinese have made numerous statements (see [here](#), [here](#) or [here](#)) showing that Iran also has their backing, which resulted in a state of [consternated shock](#) amongst MAGA fanboys. The fact that the US's “European allies” seemed to be getting cold feet about this entire project (attacking Iran on behalf of Israel, blowing-up the entire Middle-East while bringing down the world economy) only adds to their distress.

[Sidebar: the USN should rent out a few transport/amphibious assault ships, fill them up with Polaks, Balts, Ukies, and Georgians and send them to fight for “the USA” (i.e., for Israel, of course). After all, these folks are locked [in a desperate competition to see who of them can brown-nose the Empire the deepest](#), so why not give them a way to prove their unfailing loyalty to “western values” and the rest of the propaganda nonsense the legacy corporate Ziomedia feeds us (and them!) on a daily basis]

Will any of the above affect the “Putin is a traitor” or “Putin works for Bibi” crowd?

Facts? No! Who needs facts?

No, most probably not. What they will do is just ignore Patrushev's very official statement just like they have ignored all the facts since they began predicting a “Grand Russian Betrayal” for no less than 5 years now, even if proved wrong every time:

remember their whining about Syria “losing” its (utterly useless, dangerous and expensive to destroy) chemical weapons? What about their whining about Russia not doing enough for Novorussia? Or their whining about the Russians being “soft” on Israel after the Israelis caused the loss of a Russian recon aircraft? All these folks who present to us the “proof” that Putin, Bolton, and Netanyahu are “in cahoots”, and have predicted that Patrushev would “sell out” are now very busy looking somewhere else for evidence of Russia’s subservience to Israel.

At the time of writing (July 2nd), the Israelis have yet again conducted an airstrike on Syria, killing four people including a baby. The MI6 sponsored “The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights” [reported](#) that “*at least ten targets were hit in Damascus while a scientific research center and a military airbase were attacked in Homs.*” Sounds quite impressive, no?

Actually, no.

For one thing, to evaluate the effectiveness of an airstrike, you don’t list targets, you make a [bomb damage assessment](#) (BDA) to ascertain what in reality sustained a hit, and how severely. Now, the Zionist propaganda always issues triumphant reports about how the invincible Israeli air force can make minced meat out of any Russian (or other) air defense system. [Some](#), for example, have already concluded that the Israelis have “neutralized” the S-300 system while [others](#) go even further and claim that Russia either “approved” the Israeli attack or even “coordinated” it!

The Russian military has a saying “гражданский – это диагноз” which can be roughly translated as “civilian – that is a diagnosis.” In the case of these ignorant and even silly articles about the Russian air defenses in Syria (“the S-300 don’t work!!!”), that is precisely the case: these are civilians who have no understanding whatsoever of military matters in general, and even less so of air defense topics.

In my article “[S-300 in Syria – a Preliminary Assessment](#),” I explained that:

Sooner or later, however, we can be pretty confident that both the Israelis and the US will have to try to strike Syria again, if only for PR purposes. In fact, this should not be too difficult for them, here is why: First, and contrary to what is often claimed, there are not enough S-300/S-400’s in Syria to indeed “lock” all of the Syrian airspace. Yes, the Russians did create a de-facto no-fly zone over Syria, but not one which could withstand a large and determined

*attack. What the combined Russian and Syrian forces have done so far is to deny **some specific segments** of the airspace above and around Syria to the AngloZionist aggressors. This means that they can protect **some specific, high-value targets**. However, as soon as the US/Israelis get a feel for what has been deployed and where, and how this entire integrated air defense network works, they will be able to plan strikes which, while not terribly effective, will be presented by the propaganda machine as a major success for the AngloZionists. (...) So, all the AngloZionists really need to do is to be very careful in their choice of paths of approach and choice of targets, use low-RCS aircraft and missiles under the cover of a robust EW engagement and then use a large enough number of missiles to give the **appearance** that the Empire has defeated the Russian and Syrian air defenses.*

This is *exactly* what we are witnessing now. How do we know that? After all, we don't have access to classified BDAs. True. What we can do is use Christ's wise words and "judge a tree by its fruits" and notice that no amount of Israeli airstrikes in Syria have made any difference. Not only that, but we also know the kind of sustained air campaign which would be needed to meaningfully impact the Syrian armed forces, Hezbollah, the Iranians or the Russians. It sure ain't what we have seen since the Russians beefed up their air defenses in Syria.

By the way, the [SOHR article mentioned above](#) also makes a mistake saying that a "scientific research center" was attacked. Why does this matter? Well, since we know that Syria has no nuclear, chemical or bacteriological research program or weapons, we can immediately conclude that whatever the "scientific research center" was doing (assuming this was not some empty building in the first place) was not something relevant to the Syrian war effort. In other words, this "scientific research center" was chosen as a symbolic target which, for all we know, might not even have been protected in the first place. However, "Israel destroys secret Syrian research center" sounds oh-so-triumphant and presents that it was well worth attacking that target. Heck, the SOHR article even mentions destroyed *orchards* (I kid you not!). I am sure that Hezbollah and the IRGC were both very impressed by the Israeli military prowess and totally heartbroken to have been deprived of their precious orchards :-)

My question to the "Putin is a Zioagent" folks is: why in the world would you expect the Syrians or the Russians to defend empty buildings or orchards from Israeli airstrikes anyways?

Conclusion 1: Putin, the traitor? Hardly!

My regular readers will know that my support for the Kremlin is a sincere one, but also a critical one. Not only do I not believe in flag-waving (called “hat tossing” in Russian), but I do also believe that there is a very dangerous and toxic 5th column inside the Russian elites working to subordinate Russia to the Empire. So while I sometimes like to call myself a “Putin fanboy” or “Putin groupie,” I do that only in a tongue-in-cheek manner. In reality, I believe that Russia in general, and Putin specifically, actually need the criticism of those who want to see Russia truly become a sovereign nation again. So I am all for being critical of Putin and Russia. However, not all criticisms are equal or offered in a sincere spirit.

I have concluded that the folks at Langley (and elsewhere) have figured out that accusing Putin of being a journalist-murdering dictator or a nationalist freak who wants to restore the Russian Empire have entirely failed (especially inside Russia). So they switched strategies and have embarked on a major strategic PSYOP we could call “Putin the traitor”: instead of moaning about Putin being too much of a Russian patriot, they have now decided to paint him as a “not sincerely patriotic” and, truth be told, that new strategy has proven much more effective, especially against the background of the Medvedev government continuing to champion socially reactionary policies.

In fact, I suspect that Patrushev’s statement was, at least in part, designed to debunk the canard about Russia ditching either Iran or Syria. Not only that, but since the Director of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) and Secretary of the Security Council of Russia has made the Russian support for Iran crystal clear, this will now force the 5th columnists to either shut up or face sanction.

Will the putatively pro-Russian “useful idiots” who spent so much energy trying to convince everybody that Putin was Netanyahu’s puppet learn their lesson? I doubt it. In fact, I don’t think that they will ever admit being wrong: they will explain-away Patrushev’s statement as “empty talk” or something similar and resume their mantras (which is the only thing which gives them “click-visibility” anyway).

Let’s sum up what we all could observe: Russia remains the single biggest “resistance nation” on the planet (the other contender for the top position would, obviously, be Iran). The “Putin betrayed” folks have been denouncing a Russian betrayal for at least five years. The fact that no such betrayal ever materialized has had

no impact on those who are little more than useful tools for the Empire. Expect more “Putin the traitor” and “IDF defeats S-300s” articles in the future (the only way to stop them would be to stop clicking on their bait-titles which would force them to find a new source of revenue; I am not holding my breath on this one).

Conclusion 2: back to reality

In the real world the most interesting questions now are 1) how viable the current partnership between Russian and Turkey will prove over time and 2) how strong the Russian-Iranian alliance will become. It is also unclear what role the SCO will play or whether the SCO will grow more impressive military “teeth” (so far, at least as far as I know, no SCO member state has offered military help to Russia). And finally there is the big question of what China will do.

For the time being we see the Empire spewing a lot of hot air and making threats to an almost endless list of countries, while the Israelis engage in what I would call “murder psychotherapy” (which is all that IDF strikes really are) to keep their racist delusions afloat. And while the AngloZionists maniacally pursue these (pretend-)strategies, the rest of the world is building an alternative to the AngloZionist Hegemony. Will the leaders of the Empire prefer a massive war to a quiet (and rather pathetic) self-destruction of the Empire? Looking at the faces of Trump, Pompeo or Bolton, I can’t say that I feel very reassured. Yet I remain hopeful that I will see the day come when the USA, Russia and Palestine are all liberated from their oppressors and recover their full sovereignty.

The Saker

Debunking the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby's propaganda

July 12, 2019

First things first: let get the obvious out of the way

Homosexuality is a phenomenon which has probably always existed and which has often polarized society into two camps: those who believe that there is something inherently bad/wrong/pathological/abnormal with homosexuality (probably most/all major religions) and those who emphatically disagree. This is normal. After all, the issue of homosexuality deals not only with sex as such, but also with societal norms, reproduction, children and family issues and, most importantly, with love. What could be more mysterious, more fascinating and more controversial than love?

I am beginning this article with these self-evident truisms not because I find them particularly interesting, but because we live in a weird time when only one of these two views gets objectively and calmly discussed, while the other point of view is immediately censored, denounced and condemned as some kind of phobia. Now, the word "[phobia](#)" can mean one of two things: aversion/hatred or fear/anxiety.

Does this make sense to you?

Why is it that an opinion, a point of view, can only be explained away and dismissed as being in itself pathological/irrational?

Let me ask you this: can you imagine that somebody might be critical of homosexuality as such (or of homosexual behavior/practices) *without* suffering from any kind of phobias or without hating anybody?

If not, please stop reading and turn the TV back on.

For everybody else, I submit that this phobia-canard (along with the no less stupid "closet homosexual in denial" label) is not conducive to an intelligent discussion. It is, however, great to shut down any critical analyses and "*ad hominem-ing*" anybody who dares to ask the wrong questions.

Next, I also submit that there are those existing out there who do *indeed* feel an aversion/hatred/fear/anxiety towards homosexuals. These are the folks who feel their masculinity tremendously boosted when they get the chance to beat up (preferably in a group against one), humiliate or otherwise assault a homosexual. In my (admittedly

entirely subjective) experience these are a minority. True, some homosexuals do elicit a strong sense of disgust from male heterosexuals, but these are typically those homosexuals who, far from being sequestered in some societal “closet” do the opposite: they ostentatiously flaunt their homosexuality with provocative make-up, dress or behavior. Again, in my (no less subjective) experience, these are also a minority among homosexuals. I think that there is a very natural explanation for the aversion these “in your face” homosexuals trigger in male heteros, and I will discuss it later below.

But for the time being, I would rather stay away from these circumstance-specific minority phenomena.

Next, let's define the issue

In its entry for “homosexuality” [Wikipedia writes](#):

“The longstanding consensus of the behavioral and social sciences and the health and mental health professions is that homosexuality per se is a normal and positive variation of human sexual orientation, and therefore not a mental disorder”.

This sentence deserves to be parsed very carefully, especially since it uses a lot of frankly vague terms.

For starters, what does “longstanding consensus” refer to? In 1973 the US American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from the [DSM-II](#). The US American Psychological Association followed suit in 1975. This leads me to conclude that by “longstanding” Wikipedia means either 46 years or 44 years. In terms of human history, 44/46 years is close to instantaneous and hardly “longstanding”. There is also the issue of HOW and WHY these two associations decided to “*de-pathologize*” homosexuality. I will touch upon that later, and for the time being I will simply state that declaring a pathology that is henceforth to be considered as “normal” by means of a vote is hardly scientific.

Next, the statement above begs the question of what “homosexuality *per se*” is (as opposed to homosexuality “not *per se*” I suppose?). The intent here is clear: to decree that whatever co-morbidity (depression, suicide, substance abuse, violence, etc.) can be identified in homosexuality will always get explained away because it is not

inherent to homosexuality *per se*. This is just another crude word-trick to suppress any discussion of homosexuality in the real world (as opposed to DSM-like manuals).

Then there is the notion of “*normal and positive variation of human sexual orientation*” which, of course, begs the question of what would qualify as an “abnormal and negative variation of human sexuality”. And to those who would say that I am being silly here, I would point out that while in the 1970s the issue was “just” homosexuality, we nowadays live in the society of [LGBTQIAPK](#) and that some even add an ominous + sign at the end of this abbreviation (LGBTQIAPK+) just to be truly and totally “inclusive”. And here is the obvious fallacy: since homosexuality is a “*normal and positive variation of human sexual orientation*” then it must also be true for the entire LGBTQIAPK+ “constellation”. I submit that unless your IQ is way below room temperature you surely must realize that what we are dealing with here is a free for all in which [any variation of human sexuality](#) is declared “normal and positive”. QED (technically, this would be a [syllogistic fallacy](#)).

By the way – do you ever wonder what that small “+” sign at the end of LGBTQIAPK+ really stands for? The answer depends on who you ask, of course, but if you ask Facebook in the UK, it’s no less that [71 \(SEVENY ONE!!\) genders](#) (not sure if FB believes that UK users need more options than non-UK users...?). Turns out that this one small “+” is much bigger than the rest official acronym :-). And, just for giggles, here is what the full acronym (the original 10 plus the new 71 should look something like this:

**AAAAAABBCCCCCCCCCCCCFFFFFGGGGGGGHHIIIIKLMMMMMMMMNNN
OPPPQTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTW+** (yes, I still added the obligatory “+” at the end so as to be truly “inclusive” should this list grow in the future (which, no doubt, it will!).

And anybody not buying into that fallacy is, again by definition, a “hater” and, as you well know, “haters will hate”, right? And if not a hater, then at the very least a repressed closet homosexual.

So far, how do you like that intellectual environment?

I sure don’t. In fact, I loathe it, primarily because it is freedom-crushing.

So I will proceed to discuss this topic with no regard whatsoever for the politically correct *doxa* that seems to have take over the entire western world. If you think that

this makes me a “hater” (or a homosexual in deep denial) you can stop reading here, since everything below could be summarized by the one word “[crimethink](#)”, which would make me a thought-criminal.

*[Sidebar: every since I began blogging, about a decade ago, I have really pissed off a lot of people who accused me of an endless list of ideological “crimes” ranging from being a Communist, to being an anti-Semite, a Jew (or Jew-lover), a Muslim, a Nazi, a CIA/MI6/Mossad agent, a Putin agent, an FSB agent (they meant SVR, but they don’t know any better) and even (my favorite!) a “traitor to the White Race”. Frankly, my most persistent detractors have been Papists and Nazis primarily because I had the nerve to tell them that neither the Papacy nor Nazism has any traction in Russia and that Russia will never somehow step in to boost their declining popularity or influence. The truth is that Russia has exactly *zero* use for anything even remotely resembling the Alt-Right or any other racist theories (nevermind the Papacy and its terminal degeneracy – whether of the [ultramontanist](#) or the [sedevecantist](#) persuasion). The Zionists also tried to “counsel” me to change my use of the expression “AngloZionist” but they pretty rapidly gave up. As did the Papists. The Nazis complained and moaned about my anti-Nazism (I was “unfair” to Hitler and his supposedly immensely kind and Russia-loving goons!), but they eventually also gave up. The French philosopher Alain Soral once stated that (in France) the Homo Lobby is even more powerful in France than the Israel Lobby. I suspect that this is even more true in the United States and I am under no illusions about the kind of reactions my article will elicit. That’s fine. I really don’t care anymore.]*

The truth is that as long as we continue to use terms imposed upon us by the dictatorship of political correctness and as long as we leave the numerous assumptions of the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby unchallenged, we will either die of boredom or, at least, never understand why the society we live in (or why it is collapsing).

So let’s engage in some much needed crimethink!

First, let’s toss out all the stupid and ambiguous terms and expressions imposed upon us by the leaders of the Empire. For example, we could agree to ditch the value-loaded term “gay” and replace it by a value-free term “homosexual” (well, since homosexual is value-free, [homosexual activists have declared it “offensive”](#) and they demand that only “gay” be used, thus imposing a value-loaded term in lieu of the correct scientific designation). And if the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby excoriates us for doing

so, we could always declare that from now on, “gays” shall only be called “sads” (primarily on account of all the pathology and dysfunction which typically come along with homosexuality: most psychologists and psychiatrists are quite aware of that comorbidity, but speaking about it would be a career-ending mistake for them). In fact, let’s try a little thought experiment.

Let’s imagine that we organize a public debate, a town hall meeting if you want, on the topic of homosexuality. And for that purpose, we establish the following rules:

1. Homosexuals are only to be referred to as “sads”
2. Those refusing to use that term will be immediately labeled “heterophobes” and “closet heteros in deep denial”.

How many people do you think would accept that?

How would you feel if you were told that you need to comply with such outrageous demands?

Well, then why would anybody expect us to accept the very same nonsense, only in reverse?!

And yet, in 99.9999% of cases in the western media and public discourse these **ideological shackles** are present and hardly anybody dares to use a different terminology.

[Sidebar: the parallels between how the Israel Lobby carefully crafted the public discourse on Zionism and Israel and how the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby succeeded in shaping the public discourse on homosexuality is striking and not at all coincidental: for a host of reasons these two lobbies strongly support each other and learn from each other].

Do you think that this “just happened”, and that this new politically correct terminology reflects some growing understanding and awareness of the issue at hand by the general public?

Think again.

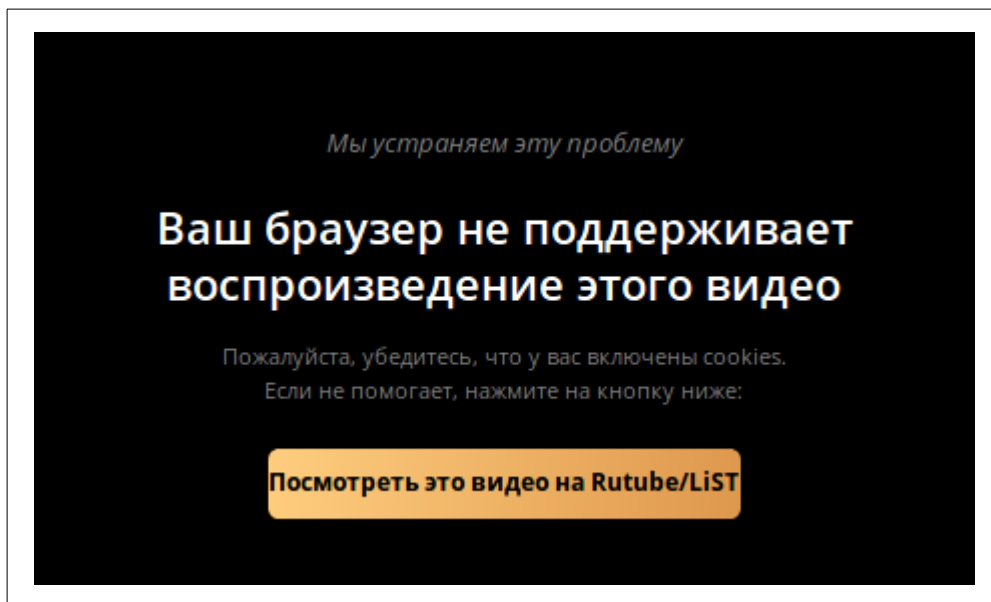
Turns out, there is a conspiracy behind this, literally. See for yourself :

AUGUST 15th NOTE FROM THE SAKER: Since YouTube (predictably) censored this video, I am now embedding it from the Russian website RuTube where it is available here:

<https://rutube.ru/video/001452b19eb53652fd5235cf967f9909/>

You can use this website: <https://savevideo.me/> to download (and save!) the video

So here is the embed from Russia:



[The truth behind the LGBT global revolution](#) от [rutube account 6447329](#) на [Rutube](#)

This video is 44 minutes long and I **highly** recommend that you watch it in full for two crucial reasons:

- It will give you a detailed analysis of how the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby conspired to use its influence to shape the public perceptions of homosexuality in the West
- It will give you a good insight into the Russian objections to the ideology and methods of the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby

Finally, I will assume that those reading further will have seen and understood the information contained in this video and that this information forms an integral part of our discussion.

Next, debunking one of the silliest arguments used by the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby

“I was born that way!”

How many times have you heard this totally meaningless argument?

And, just for comparison’s sake,

How many times have you heard this meaningless argument debunked?

(My guess? Roughly 1000:0 – right?)

Like most LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby canards, this one is based on a misleading assumption that whatever you are born with is “natural” and even “good”. The problem with that is that this same argument can be made for every mental disease and even any criminal impulse. And without going into an endless battle of numbers, I think that we can agree that if somewhere around [1.2%-2.2% of humans might be born homosexuals](#) and if [sociopaths are 3%-5% of the population](#), then sociopathy is about as “natural” as homosexuality. In fact, we could even declare that sociopathy is a “*normal and positive variation of personality*”. ***Would you want to live in a society which would proclaim that?***

[Sidebar for Christians: this argument is even more ridiculous when coming from people trying to impersonate Christians (say, like [these folks](#)). The truth is that Patristic dogmatic theology is very clear on the dogma that the Fall of Man has not only corrupted the original God-given and perfect nature of Man, but it has really corrupted all of creation: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” Rom 5:12. The problem is that Augustine of Hippo diverged from the consensus patrum on this issue and offered instead his own, misguided, interpretation of the dogma of the Original Sin. Later Anselm of Canterbury and, even more so, Thomas Aquinas further hopelessly corrupted the dogma of Original Sin and, as a result, in the West the original Patristic understanding of that dogma has been lost (generally, scholasticism has been the poison which killed western Christianity and turned it into the

abomination we all see today). Due to a lack of space, I cannot offer a full discussion of this dogma here, but I will point you to [this excellent article](#) on this topic (or, even better, the original writings of Saint Maximos the Confessor and Saint Gregory Palamas). The point here is that Christianity unambiguously teaches that every single human being (including Christ Himself who was born fully human except for sin!) as born not with the personal guilt for the sin of Adam and Eve, but with the consequences of their sin: a pathological, spiritual, psychological and even physical nature, in which pathology and even death are always present and weighing down each and **every human being**, not only homosexuals. From a truly Christian point of view the notion that what we are born with is axiomatically declared as good and natural is sheer folly. If anything, the assumption is that the opposite is true or, more accurately, that the only way for a human being to recover his/her true, perfect, original nature is to reunite with the Church of God and God Himself in a process known as “theosis” (for a superb discussion of this term, please see [here](#)), which begins with the process of repentance and renunciation self-will. The so-called “Christians” in the West seemed to have completely blocked out the following words of Saint Paul “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind” (1 Cor 6:9). Either that, or they subscribe to the absolutely self-evidently stupid notion that Christ Himself was some kind of well-meaning hippie while the evil homophobe and hater ~~Saint~~ “Paul” (sic. these folks never call saints “Saint”) perverted Christ’s original message and created some kind of “Pauline religion” instead. The facts that 1) Saint Paul was originally a vicious a persecutor of Christians and that 2) Saint Paul was surrounded by people who personally knew Christ (including the 12 and the 70) and His teachings does not lead these simple-minded people to realize that these Christians who personally knew Christ. These Christians would never let a former persecutor of Christians modify Christ’s teachings. If Saint Paul had tried to introduce any heresy, he would have been immediately condemned like all the other heretics over the centuries. Sadly, we live not in a Christian society anymore, but a post-and-pseudo-Christian one in which even the fundamentals of Christianity have been forgotten, perverted or both].

The argument that “I was born that way” is both infinitely self-serving and infinitely dishonest. But it also is a powerful illustration of how the LGBTQIAPK+

Lobby not only seeks acceptance, but also that “regular” homosexuality is used as a kind of “gateway mental disorder” which is used to force a much longer list of sexual deviations (“[paraphilias](#)”) upon the western societies [very much including pedophilia](#) (by means of [hebephilia](#) and [ephebophilia](#)). It does not have to be, but that is how the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby uses that argument, so it is legit to point that use out and debunk it too (and this is what freaks like [this one](#) will use to demand acceptance, endorsement and even special protection!).

Next, debunking the canard that homosexuality and pedophilia are totally different phenomena

That is another deceptive core-argument of the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby. I won’t go into a long historical discussion of how the term “[pederast](#)” and “[pederasty](#)” have been universally used in the past. I will just point out that the [first link above](#) says that “pederast” is “*a man who desires or engages in sexual activity with a boy*” whereas the [second one](#) defines “pederasty” as “*sexual relations between two males, especially when one of them is a minor*” (emphasis added by me, VS)! See how “fuzzy” all this rapidly becomes? Not convinced, then just add ephebophilia, hebephilia and pedophilia to the mix and see the inextricable mess you end up with!

I am lucky to speak 6 languages and understand another 3 pretty well and I can attest that in many other languages the politically incorrect word for the root for pedophile and homosexual are one and the same (ex: Russian: педераст, пидарас, пидор; French: pédale, pédé), which makes sense since the Greek word *paiderastes* means, literally, lover of boys.

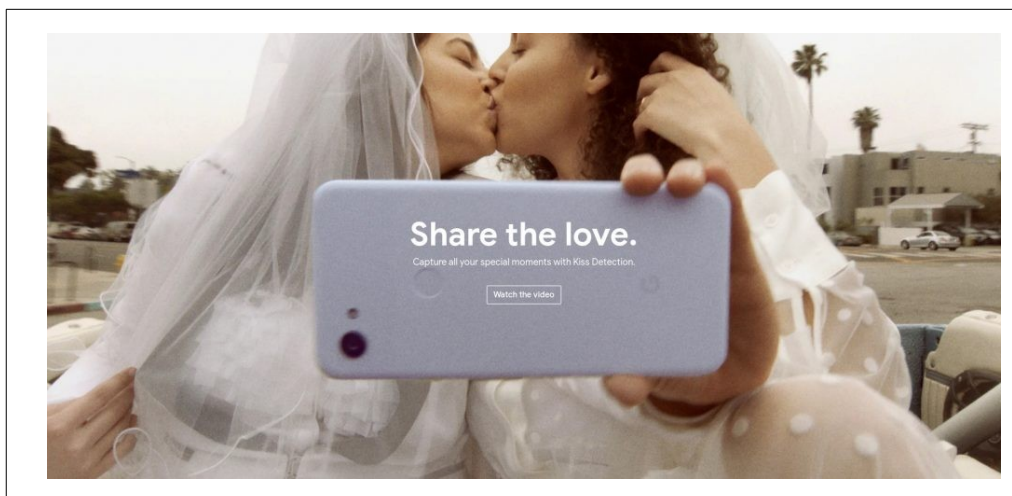
Now, I am not, repeat, **not** saying that all homosexuals are also pedophiles. What I am saying is that, contrary to LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby propaganda, the boundary between these two categories is fuzzy and ambiguous and that it most definitely is nowhere nearly as clear-cut as the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby propaganda claims it to be.

Now having debunked a few (not all!) LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby canards, let’s try to look at what is really happening here.

The truth? We are being brainwashed

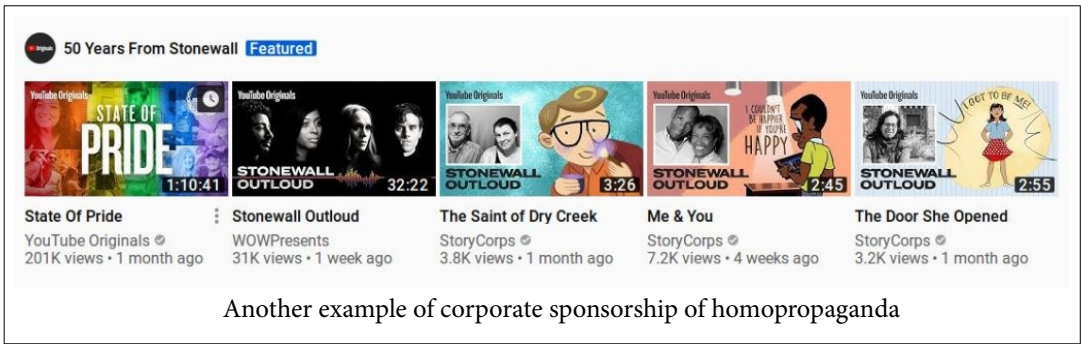
Shocked by my use of the term “brainwashed”? Fine. Use “conditioned”, or “trained” or whatever term you prefer as long as it reflects the following: there is an organized, well-financed and powerful effort made to convince you of a number of

(highly controversial and dubious) things. That is not some invention of mine, and if the video I posted above was not enough to convince you, why don't you make a quick visit to this website, a typical LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby propaganda outlet <https://www.glaad.org> and click on "About". There you will read for yourself that the purpose of this organization is to be "*Leading the conversation. Shaping the media narrative. Changing the culture. That's GLAAD at work*". Of course, GLAAD is just one star in a much bigger galaxy and we can see that galaxy at work literally everywhere. Here are just one excellent example from Google:



Is Google selling phones or pushing the agenda?

Now, if that is the new consensus in the West and if folks here like that, I personally have no objection to this whatsoever. To each his own. But when that ideology is not only shoved on the Russian people but also used in political campaigns to discredit Russia, then I have a problem with that: not only do I object to this specific case of ideological brainwashing, I object to the very notion that folks in the West have some kind of right to impose their so-called "values" on other people. As far as I am concerned, the various advocates of gender-fluidity are welcome to add "Z" (for [zoophilia](#)) or "C" (for [coprophagia](#)) to their favorite acronym, but they are not welcome to impose it on others or demand that the rest of the planet endorse it as a "*normal and positive variation*" of human sexuality or gastronomy.



And, finally, western politicians are all trying to outcompete each other as enthusiastic supporters of homosexuality. This is just one example amongst many more:

<https://youtu.be/UUePKg5V3l8>



At the very least, I find the Russian reaction to that kind of brainwashing rather refreshing, see for yourself:



I also get some solace that there are still folks in the West who do understand that this propaganda campaign is part of a real “[war on men](#)” which has been waged for many decades already. Here is the example of a lady who makes minced meat of all the “transgender madness”:



And then there is Paul Craig Roberts, truly a fearless man [who calls it as he sees it](#).

In fact, I would wager that most people in the West at least feel that something here really stinks, but that most keep their peace lest they be accused of some kind of homophobia or, more accurately, some kind of “LGBTQIAPK+phobia”.

By the way, there is also a lot of money to be made in transgenderism. [Jennifer Bilek's research](#) has found that:

“Exceedingly rich, white men with enormous cultural influence are funding the transgender lobby and various transgender organizations. These include but are not limited to [Jennifer Pritzker](#) (a male who identifies as transgender); [George Soros](#); [Martine Rothblatt](#) (a male who identifies as transgender and transhumanist); [Tim Gill](#) (a gay man); [Drummond Pike](#); [Warren and Peter Buffett](#); [Jon Stryker](#) (a gay man); [Mark Bonham](#) (a gay man); and [Ric Weiland](#) (a deceased gay man whose philanthropy is still LGBT-oriented). Most of these billionaires fund the transgender lobby and organizations through their own organizations, including corporations”.

She also points out that the kind of sums involved in the homosexuality/transgenderism propaganda are huge:

These men and others, including pharmaceutical companies and the U.S. government, are sending millions of dollars to LGBT causes. Overall reported [global spending on LGBT is now estimated at \\$424 million](#). From 2003-2013, reported funding for transgender issues increased more than [eightfold](#), growing at threefold the increase of LGBTQ funding overall, which [quadrupled](#) from 2003 to 2012. This huge spike in funding happened at the same time transgenderism began gaining traction in American culture.

I can't vouch for her figures, but I think that it is obvious beyond reasonable doubt that the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby has immense sums of money to push its agenda. I know for a fact that many (all?) US embassies abroad are delivering funds to promote “gay rights” in many (most?) countries of our poor planet.

This is, by the way, exactly the same case in Europe: being mentally handicapped is the new “cool” apparently...

Russian men (and Russian women!!) don't want to have anything to do with that toxic ideology, and this is why the most used informal term for “heterosexual” in

Russia is “натурал”, meaning “natural” in opposition to the concepts of “гей” (gay) – politically correct term – or any of the less politically correct terms used in Russia for homosexuals.

For a typical mainstream Russian reaction to the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby propaganda, I would refer you to [Ruslan Ostashko](#) (for a typically Chechen one, see what [Ramzan Kadyrov](#) has to say).

In contrast, in the Euro-compatible & Nazi-occupied Ukraine the reality is, obviously, very different:

<https://youtu.be/jYZN9YYTWA4>



Honestly? I feel sorry for the poor Euro-Ukrs...

So what is really going on in Russia?

Ain't there Gulags for gays?!

Don't the Chechens torture gays?

Actually – no.

Debunking the LGBTQIAPK+ Lobby lies about Russia

To say that homosexuals are persecuted by the state in Russia is a lie which any (honest) person who has ever been to Russia can debunk. However, what is true is that ***the Russian state and a majority of the Russian people do not accept the notion that homosexuality “is just like” heterosexual love.*** You might vehemently disagree with this idea, but do you agree that the Russian state and a majority of the Russian people are under no obligation to agree with your values any more than you are under any obligation to agree with their values? Next, ***the Russian state and a majority of the Russian people also believe that children need to have two, gender-differentiated, parents: one mother and one father.*** Again, you might vehemently disagree with this idea, but do you agree that the Russian state and a majority of the Russian people are under not under any obligation to agree with your values, any more than you are under any obligation to agree with their values? Finally, ***the Russian state and a majority of Russians believe that Russian children should not be exposed to any propaganda of homosexuality.*** Yet again, you might vehemently disagree with this idea, but do you agree that the Russian state and a majority of the Russian people are under no obligation to agree with your values any more than you are under any obligation to agree with their values?

Whatever may be the case, the laws in Russia currently support this majority Russian point of view. Hence, homosexual propaganda directed at minors is illegal and homosexual couples are not free to adopt children. And, last but certainly not least, the so-called “gay pride parade” have been banned in many Russian cities, including for the next 100 years in Moscow – something I enthusiastically support for reasons I outlined in [this article](#).

But for the rest – Russia does not have US-style sodomy laws. Russia does not tell anybody what they can/cannot or should/should not do in the privacy of their bedrooms and, in fact, homosexuals have their own clubs, bars, websites, organizations, magazines and pretty much everything else all Russians (whether “natural” or not) enjoy.

Here is what is really going on here: militant homosexuals are far from being content with “inclusion” “non-discrimination” or any other laudable things they claim to stand for. No, what they want is a two-step sequence:

1. Declare as axiomatic and self-evident that homosexuality “is just like” heterosexuality and then
2. Declare that homosexuality is now therefore an accepted norm

It’s that simple, yet that important: ***Russia categorically refuses to place an “equal” sign between the concepts of homosexuality and heterosexuality.*** In fact, the Russian culture (secular, Orthodox or Islamic) likes to stress and emphasize the differences between genders and places a premium on masculinity in men and femininity in women. In other words, Russians reject not only Neanderthal-like macho men, but also what is known as “soy boys” in the West. Likewise, Russians reject men-hating feminists as much as they reject brainless bimbos *à la* cheerleaders. If I was really cruel I would suggest that you compare (looks and brains!) the Russian spokeswomen to their White House or Foggy Bottom counterparts: this really says it all.

There is something else which I mentioned above which I want to rapidly touch upon: male hostility towards homosexuals.

But for the rest – Russia does not have US-style sodomy laws. Russia does not tell anybody what they can/cannot or should/should not do in the privacy of their bedrooms and, in fact, homosexuals have their own clubs, bars, websites, organizations, magazines and pretty much everything else all Russians (whether “natural” or not) enjoy.

Here is what is really going on here: militant homosexuals are far from being content with “inclusion” “non-discrimination” or any other laudable things they claim to stand for. No, what they want is a two-step sequence:



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2. Declare that homosexuality is now therefore an accepted norm

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There is something else which I mentioned above which I want to rapidly touch upon: male hostility towards homosexuals.

Setting aside the kind of degenerate thugs who feel the need to beat on somebody weaker than them, I do believe that homosexuality as a concept and homosexual sex as an activity is naturally repulsive to many, possibly most, men. I don't mean to say that most men are degenerate thugs who will beat up anybody weaker they find, but I did observe all my life that most men seem to have at least some degree of repulsion towards homosexuality. I could go on and just claim that these men “can't help it” and that they were “born that way”, but that would be too easy. I will attempt an explanation for this instead.

I believe that repulsion towards homosexuality is a normal and positive variation of the healthy male psyche developed to strengthen the reproductive potential of any population. Yup, it is not popular to say so, and homosexuals go to great lengths to obfuscate that (by means of adoption and propaganda, mostly) but homosexuality is totally sterile. Thus there must be a powerful natural selective pressure not only for men not to engage in homosexual behavior, but also for men to instinctively realize that “something is very not right” with homosexuality. This instinctive feeling should not be used as a justification for violence (any more than sexual attraction cannot justify rape, or



irritation justify murder), but it does explain the prevalence of heterosexual repulsion for all things “homo” (at least in males; many/most females also seem to be repulsed by (male and female) homosexuality, but the feeling seems to be less strong than in men and it does not lead to aggression).

The real question is what do we do with this kind of repulsion?

The answer depends on your culture, religion and worldview.

Even in the post-Christian West, most people know the saying “love the sinner, hate the sin” or some variation thereof. This point of view has a [very solid scriptural basis](#). This approach, by the way, makes sense whether homosexuality has its roots in nature or in nurture. In fact, from a strictly Christian point of view, homosexual behavior is no worse than any kind of sexual immorality. This makes sense as the word “sin” originally means “missing the target” or, more loosely, “failing to achieve your full potential.” There have been attempts in history to classify and order sins according to their severity. This, again, is a typically scholastic attitude. The Fathers, in contrast, sought to develop a complete dogmatic anthropology which truly understands the struggles of each human being to achieve his/her full potential (theosis) and warns about the consequences of failing to do so. Thus “sinning” is not pissing-off some bearded old guy sitting on a cloud surrounded by harp-playing overweight angels, but the failure to realize your full potential. In such a context, “hating the sinner” makes no sense at all while “hating the sin” is quite logical. Especially since the Fathers believed that the One Church of Christ is a “hospital for sinners” in which all sinners are welcome and where they get the spiritual medicine needed to achieve their full potential as human beings.

From a secular point of view, there are really only three options which [I have outlined in the past](#):

1. declare that only one specific form of sexuality is “normal”
2. arbitrarily discriminate between various forms of sexuality with no logical basis for it.
3. declare that any form of sexuality is “normal”

Most developed countries have opted for the second option, making a completely arbitrary, illogical and absurd list of “normal” and “not pathological” sexual behaviors. By the way, the same dumb approach was used in dealing with sexual practices

between consenting adults (the so-called “[sodomy laws](#)“) or the codification of a [legal age of sexual consent](#). Even a cursory look at these laws clearly shows that they are based on nothing except political expediency: they make absolutely *no* logical sense whatsoever.

Most religions and traditional societies have opted for option #1. Modern secularists initially leaned towards #2 but they are now gradually caving to the LGBTQIAPK+lobby’s pressure to accept #3.

Conclusion: this discussion is far from being over, and it won’t be suppressed either

As I said at the very beginning, the topic of homosexuality is a controversial one. It is also fascinating on many levels (biological, psychological, ethical, moral, religious, medical, societal, etc.). The main religions have, over the centuries, developed their “answer” to this phenomenon, but most of our planet nowadays lives in a secular, sometimes even atheistic, environment in which religions have lost much of their traction, especially in societies which were corrupted by centuries of western imperialism (made worse by the bizarre phobia – yes phobia – the Latin Christians have for everything and anything sexual – hence their effeminate looking and smoothly shaven priests, wearing lace (at least the “traditionalists”!), singing with an effeminate voice and thinking that this represents some true Christian tradition!). You want to see what the original Christians looked like? Look at any traditional Orthodox icon and you will see for yourself. Or visit a true Orthodox monastery. You will immediately see the difference, I promise!

For most people – religious or not – this topic ought to remain one which can be freely discussed in an intellectual and ideological environment which does not immediately place the label of “hater” on every person daring to dissent from the officially imposed dogma. Real scientific research (as opposed to ideological votes by professional associations) ought to be encouraged and regularly reviewed.

In political terms, the topic of homosexuality is just one amongst many others which have been given a **One And Only Officially Politically Correct** narrative by the AngloZionist leaders of the Empire. Other such officially “dogmatized” narratives include the truth about 9/11, the truth about the so-called “Holocaust”, the truth about Zionism and Israel or the truth about Latin Christianity (there are many more, of

course). These are all topics in which dissent is totally taboo and dissidents dismissed along with any or all of their arguments.

If we really want to stand for freedom in its most fundamental essence, we cannot accept to be herded into the intellectual cages of the “authorized” political discourse. All the lobbies which ceaselessly endeavor to silence dissent and impose their views and agenda upon us ought to be clearly identified and denounced as a danger for all of humanity. I see no reason to make an exception for the

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PPPQTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTW+

lobby, regardless of how many letters will be added to this acronym in the future.

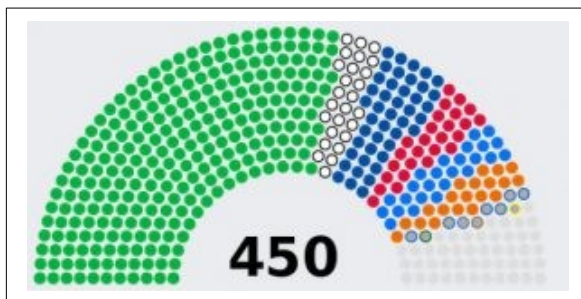
The Saker

Zelenskii's dilemma

July 25, 2019

The recent elections to the Ukrainian Rada have yielded two most interesting results:

First, almost all the nationalist parties failed to get even one representative elected to the Rada (Poroshenko's and Tymoshenko's parties did get some seats, but only 25 each)



Second, for the first time since the independence of the Ukraine, the country's President will have an absolute majority in the Rada.

These are the results as reported by the [Unian information agency](#):

The Servant of the People Party with 43.17% remains in the lead. The Opposition Platform – For Life Party ranks second with 13.01%, Yulia Tymoshenko's Batkivshchyna Party ranks third with 8.18%, Petro Poroshenko's European Solidarity Party has 8.11%, and Svyatoslav Vakarchuk's Holos (Voice) Party has 5.83%. All the other parties failed to get a representative into the Rada.

Also of interest is the score of the "Opposition Platform – for Life" party (Rabinovich, Boyko, Medvedchuk) which got [a total of 44 seats](#).

In plain English what this means is that ***the war parties have suffered a crushing electoral defeat.***

One might be forgiven in thinking that this is fantastic news for Zelenskii, but in fact it is quite the opposite: this election result creates an extremely dangerous situation for him.

Why the outcome of elections is extremely dangerous for the Ukraine

The first thing that we need to remember is while the neo-Nazis suffered two crushing defeats in a row (in the Presidential election and in the Parliamentary

elections), they have not somehow magically disappeared. Here is the key factoid which we must never forget:

The Nazi-occupied Ukraine is not a democracy, but a [plutocracy](#) combined with an [ochlocracy](#).

In plain English this means that ***the Ukraine is ruled by oligarchs, mobs and death squads.***

The entire Euromaidan is nothing more than the overthrow of one oligarchic gang by a combination of other oligarchic gangs which used neo-Nazi mobs to seize power. The fact that the USA and the EU backed this typical neo-Nazi coup really means very little: the West has always sided with anybody and everybody who is in some way against Russia. This has been true since the Middle-Ages and it is still true today (I would even argue that Hitler's rise to power was yet another operation by the Anglosphere to try to control the European continent and the fact that eventually the Nazi *golem* turned on its intended masters, does not change that).

The oligarchs are still there, as are the neo-Nazis mobs and death squads. And that creates an immense problem for Zelenskii: this new Rada might well represent the views of a majority of the Ukrainian people, but ***the real power in the country is not concentrated in the Rada at all: it is in the streets.***

Legally speaking, Zelenskii does have the tools to crack down on the oligarchs and the neo-Nazis, but in practical terms he has nothing. Okay, maybe not quite “nothing”, but whatever power he has is rooted much more in the fact that he has the backing of the ultimate Uber-oligarch Kolomoiskii (whom many consider to be the real “president” of the Ukraine, Zelenskii being nothing more than a puppet). Not only that, but Kolomoiskii has many scores to settle with Poroshenko's gang, and we can be pretty sure that he will want to his enemies to pay for what they did to him under the previous regime.

So let's sum it up.

The people of the Ukraine desperately want peace. For the time being, the Rada reflects this overwhelmingly important fact. I say “for the time being” because what will happen next is that the various forces and individuals who currently support Zelenskii have done so just to gain power. They do not, however, have a common ideological platform or even a common program. As soon as things go south (which

they will inevitably do) many (most?) of these folks will turn against Zelenskii and side with whoever can muster the biggest crowds and mete out the most violence.

In theory, Zelenskii could “go Putin” and crush the oligarchs. But Zelenskii is no Putin, to put it mildly. Furthermore, the true reason why the Ukrainian oligarchs hate and fear Russia is not because of some supposed Grand-Russian nationalism or imperialism, but because they want to keep the Ukraine in the same dysfunctional and very profitable condition in which this poor country has been kept since 1991. When Putin came to power and cracked down on the Russian oligarchs, the Ukrainian oligarchs looked in absolute horror at what was happening in Russia, and they decided to do whatever it takes to prevent that from ever happening in the Ukraine.

There is a well-known slogan in the Ukraine “Путин прыйдэ – порядок навэдэ” which can be translated as “Putin came and restored order”. This is the Ukie oligarch’s ultimate nightmare. As it so happens, it is also the AngloZionist Empire’s ultimate nightmare. Hence the apparently bizarre alliance between Anglos, Zionists and Nazis: they all fear that Putin will come and restore order to the Ukraine. Add to this the hallucinations of Hillary (“Putin wants to restore the USSR”) and Brzezinski (“Russia needs the Ukraine to be a superpower”) and you have a simple and all-encompassing explanation for what we have seen taking place in the Ukraine since the Euromaidan.

Interestingly, there are even indicators that Putin is very popular with a majority of the Ukrainian people (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) or [here](#)). This might, in part at least, explain why Poroshenko’s campaign was centered on the “either me or Putin” concept which, considering the crushing defeat suffered by Poroshenko, could suggest that Putin was the real winner of the last election or, alternatively, that folks only voted for Zelenskii as the least pro-war and the most anti-Poroshenko candidate: a kind of anti-anti-Putin candidate, at least while campaigning. Now that he got elected, Zelenskii quasi-instantly switched to the exact same rhetoric as what got Poroshenko so severely defeated. Why?

Because Zelenskiii is afraid that the neo-Nazi mobs and death squads will be unleashed against him at the very first opportunity. In fact, the neo-Nazis have already begun promising a new Maidan (see [here](#) or [here](#)).

Conclusion: Zelenskii has two options, both very dangerous

The truth is that *Zelenskii has to choose between acting on the will of the people and face the wrath of the neo-Nazis or do the will of the neo-Nazis and face the wrath of the people: tertium non datur!*

And if that was not bad enough, there is another factor making this even worse for Zelenskii: nobody can meaningfully help him.

Experience has already shown that the AngloZionists are long on promises and short on real action. In fact, we can be pretty sure that, besides more empty anti-Russian slogans, the West has very little to offer the Ukraine. And, frankly, the USA and the EU have enough very real problems to deal with to continue to waste time, energy and money on what Trump really would no doubt (privately) call a “shithole”, thereby overlooking the undeniable fact that the Ukraine is only a shithole because of the immense resources spent by the Empire to turn it into a shithole in the first place (in the Soviet times, the Ukraine was the richest and most prosperous Soviet republic).

In theory, Russia could help, of course. But we can rest assured that the neo-Nazis will immediately call for a new Maidan if Zelenskii makes any meaningful overtures to Russia. Their outraged screams will be further supported by an entire “choir” of no less horrified western politicians.

Right now Zelenskii talks the very same talk which Poroshenko, Timoshenko and the rest of the Nazi freaks talked. But he must realize that if he also walks the walk, then he will end up just as universally hated as Poroshenko is now. So what can he do?

The Ukraine desperately needs better relations with Russia, but that is impossible as long as there is a war going on in the Donbass. Furthermore, there is one question which now every Russian and Ukrainian politician has to answer: Whose is the Crimea? This is just about the most polarizing question right now, and one which forces every person to chose between the Empire (main sponsor of the “Crimea belongs to the Ukraine forever” reply) and Putin’s Russia (in which everybody except the most terminally stupid liberal politicians reply “Crimea belongs to Russia forever”).

So far, Zelenskii has apparently decided that talking is all he is going to do simply because his triumphant electoral victories have landed him in the middle of an immense minefield, and any steps he takes from now on could cost him very dearly.

Right now, in the short term, the neo-Nazi mobs represent a much bigger danger to Zelenskii than the (disorganized, demoralized and generally apathetic) people. But this will inevitably change as the economic and political situation gets worse.

The sad reality is that the Nazi occupation of the Ukraine has turned the country into a prototypical failed state and that there are no signs of any kind indicating that things might get better, even marginally, for the foreseeable future. Personally, [I am inclined to think that the “least bad” outcome for this entirely artificial country to begin with, would be to break up into several different parts](#), maybe joined by some kind of very loose confederation, possibly united by a common declaration of neutrality. Not only would that solve Ukraine’s artificiality problem, but it would also make it easier (including politically) for external actors (US, EU, Russia, UN, OSCE, EEU, SCO, etc.) to help those successor states which will form following the break-up of the current monolith.

For the time being Zelenskii appears to be dead set to repeat some of the worst mistakes of Poroshenko: the latest news is that [the Ukies have now seized a Russian tanker](#). This is a truly fantastically stupid decision as we already know what Russia will do in retaliation: “inspect” (sometimes for many hours) Ukrainian ships thereby causing immense financial losses to the owners of these ships. Whether Zelenskii ordered this operation (or, at least, authorized it) or not is irrelevant. If he did – then he is just as stupid and clueless as Poroshenko. If he did not – then he is not in control. Either way, that’s just more trouble for Zelenskii already less than impressive debut as President.

The Saker

The Last Western Empire?

August 01, 2019

“Missing the forest for the trees” is an apt metaphor if we take a look at most commentary describing the past twenty years or so. This period has been remarkable in the number of genuinely *tectonic* changes the international system has undergone. It all began during what I think of as the “[Kristallnacht](#) of international law,” 30 August September 1995, when the Empire attacked the Bosnian-Serbs in a direct and total violation of all the most fundamental principles of international law. Then there was 9/11, which gave the Neocons the “right” (or so they claimed) to threaten, attack, bomb, kill, maim, kidnap, assassinate, torture, blackmail and otherwise mistreat any person, group or nation on the planet simply because “*we are the indispensable nation*” and “*you either are with the terrorists or with us*“. During these same years, we saw Europe become a third-rate US colony incapable of defending even fundamental European geopolitical interests while the USA became a third-rate colony of Israel equally incapable of defending even fundamental US geopolitical interests. Most interestingly looking back, while the US and the EU were collapsing under the weight of their own mistakes, Russia and China were clearly on the ascend; Russia mostly in military terms (see [here](#) and [here](#)) and China mostly economically. Most crucially, [Russia and China gradually agreed to become symbionts](#) which, I would argue, is even stronger and more meaningful than if these two countries were united by some kind of formal alliance: alliances can be broken (especially when a western nation is involved), but symbiotic relationships usually last forever (well, nothing lasts forever, of course, but when a lifespan is measured in decades, it is the functional equivalent of “forever”, at least in geostrategic analytical terms). ***The Chinese have now developed an official, special, and unique expression to characterize that relationship with Russia. They speak of a “Strategic, comprehensive partnership of coordination for the new era.”***

This is the AngloZionists’ worst nightmare, and their legacy ziomeia goes to great lengths to conceal the fact that Russia and China are, for all practical purposes, strategic allies. They also try hard to convince the Russian people that China is a threat to Russia (using bogus arguments, but never-mind that). It won’t work, while some Russians have fears about China, the Kremlin knows the truth of the matter and will continue to deepen Russia’s symbiotic relationship with China further. Not only that, it now appears that Iran is gradually being let in to this alliance. We have the most

official confirmation possible of that fact in [words spoken by General Patrushev in Israel](#) after his meeting with US and Israeli officials: “*Iran has always been and remains our ally and partner.*”

I could go on listing various signs of the collapse of the AngloZionist Empire along with signs that a new, parallel, international world order is in the process of being built before our eyes. I have done that many times in the past, and I will not repeat it all here (those interested can click [here](#) and [here](#)). I will submit that the AngloZionists have reached a terminal stage of decay in which the question of “if” is replaced by “when.” But even more interesting would be to look at the “what”: what does the collapse of the AngloZionist Empire really mean?

I rarely see this issue discussed and when it is, it is usually to provide all sorts of reassurances that the Empire will not really collapse, that it is too powerful, too rich and too big to fail and that the current political crises in the USA and Europe will simply result in a reactive transformation of the Empire once the specific problems plaguing it have been addressed. That kind of delusional nonsense is entirely out of touch with reality. And the reality of what is taking place before our eyes is much, much more dramatic and seminal than just fixing a few problems here and there and merrily keep going on.

One of the factors which lures us into a sense of complacency is that we have seen so many other empires in history collapse only to be replaced pretty quickly by some other, that we can't even imagine that what is taking place right now is a much more dramatic phenomenon: the passage into gradual irrelevance of an entire civilization!

But first, let's define our terms. For all the self-aggrandizing nonsense taught in western schools, Western civilization does not have its roots in ancient Rome or, even less so, in ancient Greece. The reality is that the Western civilization was born from the Middle-Ages in general and, especially, the 11th century which, not coincidentally, saw the following succession of moves by the Papacy:

- 1054: Rome separates itself from the rest of the Christian world in the so-called [Great Schism](#)
- 1075: Rome adopts the so-called [Papal Dictation](#)
- 1095: Rome launches the [First Crusade](#)

These three closely related events are of absolutely crucial importance to the history of the West. The first step the West needed was to free itself from the influence and authority of the rest of the Christian world. Once the ties between Rome and the Christian world were severed, it was only logical for Rome to decree that the Pope now has the most extravagant super-powers no other bishop before him had ever dared contemplate. Finally, this new autonomy and desire for absolute control over our planet resulted in what could be called “the first European imperialist war”: the First Crusade.

To put it succinctly: *the 11th century Franks were the real progenitors of modern “Western” Europe and the 11th century marked the first imperialist “foreign war”* (to use a modern term). The name of the Empire of the Franks has changed over the centuries, but not its nature, essence, or purpose. Today the true heirs of the Franks are the AngloZionists (for a truly *superb* discussion of the Frankish role in desotrying the true, ancient, Christian Roman civilization of the West, see [here](#)).

Over the next 900 years or more, many different empires replaced the Frankish Papacy, and most European countries had their “moment of glory” with colonies overseas and some kind of ideology which was, by definition and axiomatically, declared the only good (or even “the only Christian”) one, whereas the rest of the planet was living in uncivilized and generally terrible conditions which could only be mitigated by those who have *always* believed that they, their religion, their culture or their nation had some kind of messianic role in history (call it “manifest destiny” or “White man’s burden” or being a [Kulturträger](#) in quest of a richly deserved [Lebensraum](#)): the West Europeans.

It looks like most European nations had a try at being an empire and at imperialist wars. Even such modern mini-states like Holland, Portugal or Austria once were feared imperial powers. And each time one European Empire fell, there was always another one to take its place.

But today?

Who do you think could create an empire powerful enough to fill the void resulting from the collapse of the AngloZionist Empire?

The canonical answer is “China.” And I think that this is nonsense.

Empires cannot only trade. Trade alone is simply not enough to remain a viable empire. Empires also need military force, and not just any military force, but the kind of military force which makes resistance futile. The truth is that NO modern country has anywhere near the capabilities needed to replace the USA in the role of World Hegemon: not even uniting the Russian and Chinese militaries would achieve that result since these two countries do not have:

1. a worldwide network of bases (which the USA have, between 700-1000 depending on how you count)
2. a major strategic air-lift and sea-lift power projection capability
3. a network of so-called “allies” (colonial puppets, really) which will assist in any deployment of military force

*But even more crucial is this: **China and Russia have no desire whatsoever to become an empire again.** These two countries have finally understood the eternal truth, which is that empires are like parasites who feed on the body which hosts them. Yes, not only are **all empires always and inherently evil**, but a good case can be made that the **first victims of imperialism are always the nations which “host the empire”** so to speak. Oh sure, the Chinese and the Russians want their countries to be truly free, powerful and sovereign, and they understand that this is only possible when you have a military which can deter an attack, but neither China nor Russia have any interests in policing the planet or imposing some regime change on other countries. All they really want is to be safe from the USA, that’s it.*

This new reality is particularly visible in the Middle-East where countries like the United States, Israel or Saudi Arabia (this is the so-called “Axis of Kindness”) are currently only capable of deploying a military capable of massacring civilians or destroy the infrastructure of a country, but which cannot be used effectively against the two real regional powers with a modern military: Iran and Turkey.

But the most revealing litmus test was the US attempt to bully Venezuela back into submission. For all the fire and brimstone threats coming out of DC, the entire “Bolton plan(s)” for Venezuela has/have resulted in a truly embarrassing failure: if the Sole “Hyperpower” on the planet cannot even overpower a tremendously weakened country right in its backyard, a country undergoing a major crisis, then indeed the US military should stick to the invasion of small countries like Monaco, Micronesia or maybe the Vatican (assuming the Swiss guard will not want to take a shot at the armed reps of the “indispensable nation”). The fact is that an increasing number of medium-sized “average” countries are now gradually acquiring the means to resist a US attack.

So if the writing is on the wall for the AngloZionist Empire, and if no country can replace the USA as imperial world hegemon, what does that mean?

It means the following: *1000 years of European imperialism is coming to an end!*

This time around, neither Spain nor the UK nor Austria will take the place of the USA and try to become a world hegemon. In fact, there is not a single European nation which has a military even remotely capable of engaging the kind of “colony pacification” operations needed to keep your colonies in a suitable state of despair and terror. The French had their very last hurrah in Algeria, the UK in the Falklands, Spain can't even get Gibraltar back, and Holland has no real navy worth speaking about. As for central European countries, they are too busy brown-nosing the current empire to even think of becoming an empire (well, except Poland, of course, which dreams of some kind of Polish Empire between the Baltic and the Black Sea; let them, they have been dreaming about it for centuries, and they will still dream about it for many centuries to come...).

Now compare European militaries with the kind of armed forces you can find in Latin America or Asia? There is such a knee-jerk assumption of superiority in most Anglos that they completely fail to realize that medium and even small-sized countries can develop militaries sufficient enough to make an outright US invasion impossible or, at least, any occupation prohibitively expensive in terms of human lives and money (see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). This new reality also makes the typical US missile/airstrike campaign pretty useless: they will destroy a lot of buildings and bridges, they will turn the local TV stations (“propaganda outlets” in imperial terminology) into giant piles of smoking rubble and dead bodies, and they kill plenty of innocents, but that won't result in any kind of regime change. The striking fact is that if we accept that warfare is the continuation of politics by other means, then we also have to admit, that under that definition, the US armed forces are totally useless since they cannot help the USA achieve any meaningful political goals.

The truth is that in military and economic terms, the “West” has already lost. The fact that those who understand don't talk, and that those who talk about this (denying it, of course) have no understanding of what is taking place, makes no difference at all.

In theory, we could imagine that some kind of strong leader would come to power in the USA (the other western countries are utterly irrelevant), crush the Neocons like Putin crushed them in Russia, and prevent the brutal and sudden collapse of the

Empire, but that ain't gonna happen. If there is one thing which the past couple of decades have proven beyond reasonable doubt is that the imperial system is entirely unable to reform itself in spite of people like Ralph Nader, Dennis Kucinich, Ross Perrot, Ron Paul, Mike Gravel or even Obama and Trump – all men who promised meaningful change and who were successfully prevented by the system of achieving anything meaningful. Thus the system is still 100% effective, at least inside the USA: it took the Neocons less than 30 days to crush Trump and all his promises of change, and now it even [got Tulsi Gabbard to bow down and cave in](#) to Neocons' absolutely obligatory political orthodoxy and myths.

So what is likely to happen next?

Simply put, Asia will replace the Western World. But – crucially – ***this time around no empire will come to take the place of the AngloZionist one.*** Instead, a loose and informal coalition of mostly Asian countries will offer an alternative economic and civilizational model, which will be immensely attractive to the rest of the planet. As for the Empire, it will very effectively disband itself and slowly fade into irrelevance. Both US Americans and Europeans will, for the very first time in their history, have to behave like civilized people, which means that their traditional “model of development” (ransacking the entire planet and robbing everybody blind) will have to be replaced by one in which these US Americans and Europeans will have to work like everybody else to accumulate riches. This notion will absolutely horrify the current imperial ruling elites, but I wager that it will be welcomed by the majority of the people, especially when this “new” (for them) model will yield more peace and prosperity than the previous one!

Indeed, if the Neocons don't blow up the entire planet in a nuclear holocaust, the USA and Europe will survive, but only after a painful transition period which could last for a decade or more. One of the factors which will immensely complicate the transition from Empire to “regular” country will be the profound and deep influence 1000 years of imperialism have had on the western cultures, especially in the completely megalomaniac United States ([Professor John Marciano's “Empire as a way of life” lecture series](#) addresses this topic superbly – I highly recommend them!): One thousand years of brainwashing are not so easily overcome, especially on the subconscious (assumptions) level.

Finally, the current rather nasty reaction to the multi-culturalism imposed by the western ruling elites is no less pathological than this corrosive multi-culturalism in the

first place. I am referring to the new theories “revisiting” WWII and finding inspiration in all things Third Reich, very much including a revival of racist/racialist theories. This is especially ridiculous (and offensive) when coming from people who try to impersonate Christians but who instead of prayers on their lips just spew 1488-like nonsense. These folks all represent precisely the kind of “opposition” the Neocons love to deal with and which they always (and I really mean *always*) end up defeating. This (pretend) opposition (useful idiots, really) will remain strong as long as it remains well funded (which it currently is). But as soon as the current megalomania (“*We are the White Race! We built Athens and Rome! We are Evropa!!!*”) ends with an inevitable faceplant, folks will eventually return to sanity and realize that no external scapegoat is responsible for the current state of the West. The sad truth is that the West did all this to itself (mainly due to arrogance and pride!), and the current waves of immigrants are nothing more than a 1000 years of really bad karma returning to where it came from initially. I don’t mean to suggest that folks in the West are all individually responsible for what is happening now. But I do say that all the folks in the West now live with the consequences of 1000 years of unrestrained imperialism. It will be hard, very hard, to change ways, but since that is also the only viable option, it will happen, sooner or later.

But still – there is hope. **IF** the Neocons don’t blow up the planet, and **IF** mankind is given enough time to study its history and understand where it took the wrong turn, then maybe, just maybe, there is hope.

I think that we can all find solace in the fact that no matter how ugly, stupid and evil the AngloZionist Empire is, no other empire will ever come to replace it.

In other words, should we survive the current empire (which is by no means certain!) then at least we can look forward to a planet with no empires left, only sovereign countries.

I submit that this is a future worth struggling for.

The Saker

Ukie nationalism vs Otto von Bismarck

August 14, 2019

When Zelenskii came to power, there were two fundamental options he could have chosen. These options were, roughly:

Option one or pragmatism above ideology: to make a determined effort to address Ukraine's most urgent problems. At the very least, Zelenskii could have ordered his forces to stop firing and have them withdraw to a safe distance (Zelenskii had the full authority to do so, as soon as he was inaugurated and he did not need anybody's help to do so). Obviously, such a move would have to be coordinated with the LDNR forces. And that, in turn, means that at the very least, Zelenskii should have opened a channel of direct communications with the two republics. This option could be described as "*beginning to implement at least [the very first steps of the Minsk Agreements](#).*"

Option two ideology above pragmatism: to make a determined effort **not** to address Ukraine's most urgent problems. The priority here is to declare that the Ukraine will not honor the Minsk Agreements: no talks with the LDNR, no ceasefire, no withdrawal of forces, no amnesty and, most definitely, no discussions about any kind of special status for the Donbass. This option could be described as "*more of the same*" or "*Poroshenko reloaded*."

Prince Otto von Bismarck once famously said that "*politics is the art of the possible*" and I think that this is an excellent rule to keep in mind when trying to figure out what is going on and what might happen next. There is a lot of hyperbolic rhetoric out there, but no matter how delusional Ukie politicians can be, the reality remains something objective, and that objective reality is what will shape the future, not the empty ideological nonsense spewed by politicians (whether Ukrainian ones or AngloZionists).

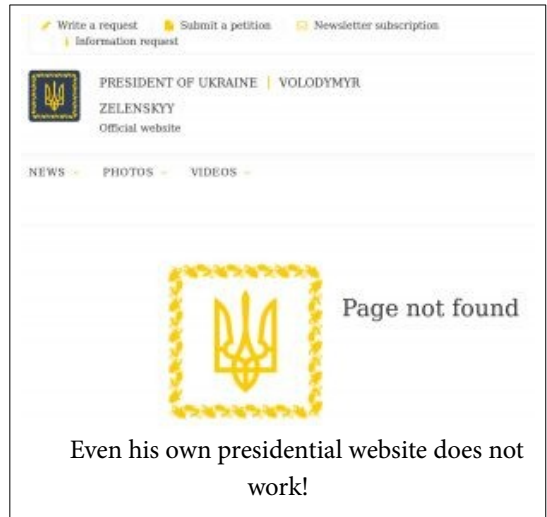
As of right now, the overwhelming majority of experts have agreed that Zelenskii is not going for Option #1. This strongly suggests that the Ukraine is going for Option #2. But, as I have indicated above, Zelenskii's Option #2 is nothing more than, well, "more of the same." And this makes sense, especially if we consider that:

1) the same causes produce the same outcomes (after all “insanity is repeating the same thing over and over expecting a different result) and

2) the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior

So what really happened? Why is Zelenskii apparently dead set on repeating all the same mistakes Poroshenko made?

As I have indicated [in a recent article](#), the Ukraine is not a democracy but an **oligarchy**: ever since 1991 the most prosperous Soviet republic was mercilessly plundered by an entire class (in the Marxist sense of the word) of oligarchs whose biggest fear has always been that the same “horror” (from their point of view) which befell Russia with Putin, would eventually arrive at the Ukraine.



Here we need to make something clear: this is NOT, repeat, NOT about nationality or nationalism. The Ukrainian oligarchs are just like any other oligarchs: their loyalty is to their money and nothing else. If you want to characterize these oligarchs, you could think of them as culturally “post-Soviet” meaning that they don’t care about nationality, and even though their prime language is Russian, they don’t give a damn about Russia or Russians (or anybody else, for that matter!). Since many of them are Jews, they have a network of supporters/accomplices in Israel of course, but also in the West and even in Russia. In truth, these guys are the ultimate “internationalists” in their own, toxic, kind of way.

The other significant force in the Ukraine is the West Ukrainian (Galician) Nazi death-squads and mobs. Their power is not a democracy either, but an **ochlocracy**.



Some fine specimens of “ochlocrats”

These guys are a minority, a pretty small one even, but they have enough muscle and even firepower to threaten any nominal Ukrainian leader. Furthermore, these folks have profoundly infiltrated all the police and security forces which, in theory, would have been able to control or disarm them (the SBU, especially, is chock full of Urkonazi thugs).

Now let's begin by looking at the oligarchs: their number 1 priority is to continue to plunder the Ukraine. For that, you need the opposite of "law and order": you need lawlessness, chaos, violence and, most importantly, you need the tiny figleaf of "the Moskal aggression" to hide behind. In other words, while these oligarchs probably do not want an open a full-scale war with the LDNR (or, even less with Russia herself), they simply cannot allow peace to break-out.

The Ukronazis don't want peace to break out either, lest their influence and power shrink back to something roughly proportional to their share of the population of the Ukraine. Besides, since their entire ideology and worldview is all about hating Russia and being anti-Russia, any peace with Russia is literally unthinkable for them. They and their Polish supporters want Russia to break apart in numerous small state-lets which they (or, in their delusional dreams, the Chinese) could dominate. These folks will always perceive Russia as an existential threat. In their own way, they are absolutely right: Russia will always remain the reality check on their delusions. This was as true in the distant 13th century as it is nowadays.

Finally, let's keep in mind that neither the oligarchs nor the Ukronazis genuinely want the people of Crimea and the Donbass to be part of "their" Ukraine since the overwhelming majority of these people would categorically oppose both the oligarchs and the Ukronazis. Yes, for prestige and ideological reasons, all these Galician Nazis will always declare that "Crimea is forever Ukrainian" and "we shall reconquer the Donbass," but what they are genuinely fantasizing about is the territory, and *only* the territory. As for the 2 million-plus virulently anti-Nazi people currently living on these lands, they simply want them either dead or expelled).

So, while about 70% or so of the people of the Ukraine want peace to return and the horrors of the civil war to finally stop, *the only two groups who have real power want the civil war in the East to continue*. There are even quite a few Zelenskii nominees who have declared that war with the LDNR is the only way to solve the crisis. Some even want war with Russia!

Reality, however, is a pesky thing and, as the expression goes, if your head is in the sand, your butt is in the air and the collective Ukronazi “butt” has been exposed in the air for several years now. This is also true for the supposed “reforms” of the Ukronazi forces.

Quite a few signs are indicating that most of the so-called “reforms” and “reorganization” of the Ukronazi forces were more about corruption (what else!?) and window dressing than anything else. Galicians are generally famous as world-class torturers and executioners of civilians, but not really military commanders (this is why Ukronazi “historians” are now desperately parsing every year in the history of what is called the Ukraine today to find some kind of “Ukrainian” victory; all they came up with so far are very small, completely irrelevant, local battles). In contrast, the LDNR forces seem to be doing pretty well, and their morale appears to be as strong as ever (which is unsurprising since their military ethos is based in 1000 years of Russian military history). Last, but certainly not least, there is Putin’s rather striking warning during the Olympics when he declared that any Ukronazi attack would have, quote, “*very serious consequences for Ukrainian statehood.*”

This warning was apparently heeded both in Kiev and in Washington, DC.

The mood of the Russian public opinion seems to be one of total disgust and frustrated anger. It’s not like Zelenskii was ever very popular in Russia, but at least he was no Nazi, and he seemed to be willing to take at least the very first steps towards finally stopping the insanity. That hope is now totally shattered (the Russian media reports all the anti-Russian statements of the various Zelenskii nominees daily).

While the Kremlin more often than not sticks to its traditional diplomatic language, most Russian experts appear to be fed-up with Zelenskii and his antics and are now all pushing for some kind of hardening of the Russian stance towards this 5-year long Banderastan. And the Kremlin has paid attention: Russia is now handing out passports to pretty much any Ukrainian wanting to get one. This is the first step in a time-tested sequence, the next one which would be the recognition of the LDNR as sovereign states (as was done in Abkhazia and South Ossetia).

Many wonder what in the world Putin is waiting for and why Russia has not officially recognized these republics yet?

The reasons for this are as simple as they are compelling:

First, any premature recognition would further fuel the western fairy-tale about “Russia” having “invaded” the Ukraine to grab land. If the AngloZionists did not shy away from making such claims while Russian forces were still in their barracks, you could imagine the hysterical shrieks we would have heard from the “collective West” if Russia indeed had decided to move her forces into the Donbass to stop the Ukronazi aggression!

Second, to the degree that the Empire created an “anti-Russia” with its Ukronazi Banderastan, Russia created an “anti-Banderastan” with the LDNR. This is very important and must never be overlooked: yes, Nazi-occupied Ukraine is a never healing wound in the side of Russia, but Novorussia also is a never healing wound in the side of Nazi-occupied Ukraine. The big difference is that Russia is strong enough to cope with her wound, whereas the Ukronazi Banderastan never had a chance and has already collapsed beyond any hope of survival.

Third, Russia simply cannot afford to pay by herself the immense bill for the eventual reconstruction of devastated Ukraine. Just fixing Crimea is already an enormous and extremely costly task for Russia, especially after decades of Ukie neglect, but at least down the road, it is obvious that Crimea is headed for prosperity and that the returns on investment will be huge. But single-handedly rebuilding the entire Donbass is probably beyond the Russian means. Currently, Russia is already providing vast amounts of aid to the Novorussians, and she is basically maxed out.

Finally, let’s remember here that the UNSC approved the Minsk Agreements and that, as such, they are not an elective: the Minsk Agreements are obligatory under international law. And here is the beauty: Russia is not a part of the Minsk Agreements, only the Ukraine and the LDNR are. Thus while the AngloZionists mantrically repeat that “*Russia must be sanctioned for not abiding by the Minsk Agreements*” or “*Russia must do more*” – they all do secretly realize that this is empty, hot, air. Besides, even the duller western leaders now are beginning to realize which side truly does not want to abide by these agreements.

These agreements are even less popular in Novorussia than they are in Kiev: it is an open secret that the Novorussians will never agree to be ruled from Kiev again. Ever. And, sooner or later, they will join Russia in some shape or form. But that is in the future. For the time being, the Novorussians are smart enough to realize that they should go along and let the Ukronazi idiots openly sabotage these agreements. And since Zelenskii and his nominees are now declaring that they will never negotiate with

the LDNR (which the Minsk Agreements require), it is not Russia or the LDNR which destroyed these agreements, but the Ukrainian government, quite officially so.

One striking development since the election of Zelenskii is the number of Ukrainian political figures which have openly declared that the Ukraine should simply militarily re-capture the Donbass (some even suggested Crimea). It is thus probably a good idea to revisit the military options on all sides.

Let's begin with the *Ukronazi dream*: this is pretty straightforward, and plenty of Ukrainian officials have mentioned the "Croatian option" which refers to the surprise attack of the Croats (fully backed by NATO) against the Serbian UN Protection Areas in Croatia (see "[Operation Storm](#)" on Wikipedia). The model is simple: pretend to negotiate in good faith, get (sympathetic) peacekeepers to disarm all the locals, then attack them with



The sweet irony of Ukie politics: a Ukronazi vandalizes the portrait of the man who created the Ukraine in the first place!

everything you've got. If the LDNR were all alone, cut off from Russia, there could be a theoretical (if somewhat unlikely) chance of success of such an attack. But we need to remember here that the Krajina-Serbs (and the Bosnian-Serbs too) were betrayed by Slobodan Milosevic who did nothing to protect them. In fact, Serbia even slammed sanctions against the Republika Srpska. Finally, NATO had complete and total air supremacy.

The case of the LDNR could not be more different because far from betraying the Donbass or imposing sanctions as Milosevic did, Putin gave the LDNR the full support of Russia. If the Ukrainians do attack, Russia will have a very wide array of options to chose from including:

1. Sending in more humanitarian aid
2. Sending in more military equipment (the "Voentorg")
3. Sending in more volunteers (the "northern wind"), especially highly trained professionals
4. Sharing intelligence and reconnaissance data with the LDNR forces

5. Deploying forward air controllers (FACs) in special forces teams to coordinate artillery strikes on Ukonazi targets from across the border
6. Shooting down Ukrainian missiles and aircraft (including UAVs)
7. Engaging Russian electronic warfare units to disrupt Ukie signals (radars, including counter-battery, GNSS signals, audio, and video communications, data links, etc.)

So far, this is what Russia has already done in the past (options #5-6-7 only in a few specific instances).

Now what people usually see as the next escalatory option for Russia would be to send ground forces into Novorussia to directly engage the attacking Ukonazi forces.

In truth, Russia has plenty of other options before a ground operation. For example, one further Russian option could include:

8. Officially declaring a “humanitarian no-fly zone” *à la* Libya, in which “all means necessary” will be used to stop the aggression and then immediately send in Russian fixed-wing and rotary-wing close air support & strike aircraft (under cover of interceptors and multi-role fighters, of course) and even bombers to destroy advancing Ukie units.

Russia could very easily declare a no-fly zone over the Donbass without moving a single air defense unit across the border: Russian long-range air defenses are more than enough to “lock” that entire airspace, especially if combined with AWACS and interceptors (with long-range missiles).

Still, these steps, while very visible, would still be limited to the Donbass area of operations. But Russia could take this one step further and strike very specific targets in the rest of the Ukraine. Specifically,

9. Russia could sink the entire (tiny) Ukrainian “fleet” in port or on the high seas. That would not be militarily significant, but politically it would send the correct message.
10. Russia could decide to also destroy the Ukrainian air force by destroying the main Ukrainian airfields. Russia could very easily do this with long-range cruise missiles. Once enough runways, ATC towers, radars, fuel and oil storage facilities, etc. are destroyed, the Ukrainian airforce as such would cease to exist (even if individual aircraft could be hidden and survive the Russian strikes).

11. Next, Russia could get serious with the Ukrainian ground forces and begin striking key command posts, communication nodes, fuel and ammo dumps, bridges, etc. The goal here would not be to kill as many Ukrainian servicemen as possible, but to hit in the right places to make it impossible for the Ukrainian military to engage in coordinated offensive operations.
12. Finally, Russia could decide to open the hunting season on key officials and begin executing some of the most odious Nazi officials (just to scare the rest). Again, cruise missiles are probably the most obvious option here, but other options can be very successfully used including the “Dudaev trick” (an antiradiation missile aimed at a Satphone signal) or even go “full NATO” and begin hitting politically symbolic buildings.

I mention these last four options because these are doable, but they are also total overkill.

The truth is that should Russia ever truly intervene, most Ukrainian servicemen will run or surrender (they did not vote Zelenskii for the privilege to die for a sick, Nazi, ideology and worldview). Again, past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior and the case of the Crimea has shown that once the (relatively small!!) Russian forces intervened, nobody had the courage (or the motivation) to resist.

[Sidebar: the popular joke about this goes like this: ask a Ukrainian nationalist why the Ukrainians are fighting in the Donbass, and the obligatory politically correct answer is “because the Russians are there!”; and if you then ask him why the Ukraine is not fighting in Crimea, he will reply “because the Russians are really there!“. This is very true. The Urkonazis have tried to engage in low-level forms of terrorism (planting bombs, mostly), but with very little success. As for really attacking Crimea (probably one of the best-defended locations on the planet by now!) – that would be a suicide mission for an entire US Marine Expeditionary Force ([MEF](#)), never-mind the derelict Ukie military!]

Furthermore, for the Russians, they have been ***intensively preparing for a major war against NATO for at least five years now*** (for details, see [here](#)) and they are quite ready to take on the united West (that is what [Guards Tank Armies](#) are designed to do), so for them to take on the decrepit, corrupt, demoralized, disorganized and generally “mangy” Ukronazi forces would not even represent a significant effort. Every halfway competent military analyst out there knows that. Even the Ukronazi ones.

What this all means for the Zelenskii administration is simple: if you try the “**Croatian scenario**” you will end up not with a “Croatian outcome” but a “**Georgia 08.08.08 outcome**”: obliteration of your armed forces in 48 hours, followed by the net loss of 20% of your national territory (probably more in the case of the Ukraine!).

[Sidebar: for many years now I have been explaining that the real goal of any Ukronazi attack on Novorussia would not be to really win, but to force Russia to openly intervene. However, this strategy has failed while the balance of forces, including in political terms, has changed. It is one thing to start a war with the LDNR only to force Russia to intervene, and quite another to expose your entire country to “very serious consequences” for its entire “statehood.” Putin’s (truly quite extraordinary) threat has explicitly raised the bar of the potential Russian retaliation much higher than it was before.]

So is there anything even vaguely resembling *any* kind of solution in sight?

Well, in theory, there would have been the Minsk Agreement solution. The Novorussians would not like it, but Russia could probably impose it upon them. Russia herself sure could live with such an outcome (no, Russia has absolutely no need of any additional territories, especially devastated ones!). But since the Ukronazis are too ideological and delusional to ever accept that option, then there is an obvious Plan B: Russia unilaterally recognizes the LDNR Republics who then vote to join the Russian Federation. In theory, the rest of the Ukraine could realize that there are advantages to this situation, including getting rid of 2 million anti-Nazis. But their ideology (really a local uniquely Galician brand of ultra-nationalism – similar only to the WWII Ustashe regime in Croatia – imposed upon the entire country) makes it absolutely impossible for these rabid nationalists to accept such a loss of territory, particularly in a humiliating civil war against their own people (or so they claim). Simply put, you cannot claim to be the descended of the 200’000 year old “Ancient Ukr” who built the pyramids, who dug the Black Sea, who gave birth to the Aryan civilization and whose language is the basis of Sanskrit and, at the same time, admit that a big chunk of your own population prefers death to life under your rule. In reality, not only are these folks not willing to accept any loss of territory (whether *de jure* or *de facto*), some of them are even claiming territories inside the Russian Federation.

Thankfully, their delusions really make no difference: Novorussia and Crimea are gone, forever, no matter what anybody says.

Frankly, I believe that *even without Crimea and even without Novorussia current Nazi-occupied Ukraine is still not viable*, if only because the southern regions (Odessa, Nikolaev, Mariupol) will never agree to become Nazi-occupied protectorates of the very same Galician Urkonazis who have already burned people alive in Odessa. The truth is that the Galicians would be much better off severing their (entirely artificial) ties to what is known as “the Ukraine” nowadays and fall back to [their true historical lands](#). Ideology, however, will never allow most of them to see that. The process of disintegration of the rump-Ukraine will probably continue in one form or another.

Conclusion: how one slogan can lead to a very different one

The entire Ukronazi worldview can be summarized in their well-known slogan: “*to drown all the Kikes and Polaks in Moskal blood*” (or some variations thereof). The problem with this slogan is that there is simply no way the (relatively small) Galician population can ever succeed in permanently defeating their much bigger (and, frankly, much smarter) Jewish, Polish or Russian neighbors. Thus time and again, the policies which begin with this famous Ukie slogan inevitably result in a rather painful variation on another very famous Ukie slogan: “*suitcase, railway station, Russia*” but, crucially, in a fundamentally different combination: “*suitcase, railway station, and back to Canada/Israel!*” ;-)

I personally don't care what happens to these folks or to the lands which they historically inhabited. If the Austrians, the Poles, the Hungarians or the Germans want them – they are welcome to have them. After all, [these are the folks who, along with the Papacy, created the Ukraine and the Ukronazi phenomenon](#). So, *bien du plaisir!*, as the French say: let them enjoy their offspring!

If the people of some future rump-Ukraine are strong and wise enough to get rid of that Nazi rot – good for them, they can count on Russian help and support for reconstruction. But if they are not – then that's their problem.

When humans go out of their way to ignore reality, they deserve whatever comes their way.

The Saker

The Saker interviews Professor Seyed Mohammad Marandi

August 21, 2019

Introduction: first, several friends recently suggested that that I should interview [Professor Seyed Mohammad Marandi](#); then I read [this most interesting text on Moon of Alabama](#) and I decided to ask Professor Marandi to share his views of the current situation in Iran, the Persian Gulf the rest of the Middle-East who very kindly agreed to reply to my question in spite of his most hectic and busy schedule. I am most grateful to Prof. Marandi for his time and replies. Crucially, Prof. Marandi debunks the silly notion that Russia and Israel are allies or working together. He also debunks that other canard about Russia and Iran having some major differences over Syria. Prof. Marandi, who is currently in Iran, is superbly connected and informed, and I hope that with this interview some of the more outlandish rumors which were recently circulated will finally be seen for what they are: utter, total, nonsense. Enjoy the interview!

The Saker

The Saker: It is often said that there is an “axis of resistance” which comprises Syria, Hezbollah, Iran, Russia and China. Sometimes, Venezuela, Cuba or the DPRK are added to this list. Do you believe that there is such an “axis of resistance” and, if yes, how would you characterize the nature of this informal alliance? Do you think that this informal alliance can ever grow into a formal political or military alliance or a collective security treaty?

Professor Marandi: I definitely believe there is an Axis of Resistance that currently includes Iran, Syria, Iraq, Gaza Lebanon, parts of Afghanistan, and Yemen. I do not think that we can include the DPRK in any way or form. I believe that Russia could be considered to a certain degree as aligned or affiliated to this resistance, but that this is not something many would feel the need to acknowledge. At certain levels, there is a lot of overlap between Russian and Chinese policy and the policies of the countries and movements in this region that are affiliated to this Axis of Resistance. The same is true with countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia, and Cuba, which I do not consider to be similar to North Korea at all. Just as almost everywhere else, American policy in the Korean Peninsula is ugly, hegemonic and malevolence, but the nature of the DPRK government is fundamentally different from that of Venezuela or Cuba, whether the

Americans or Europeans like to acknowledge that or not. Others can interpret the Axis of Resistance to include or exclude certain countries, but it is pretty clear that Iran and Russia have similar policy objectives when it comes to certain key issues. Nevertheless, Russia has a close relationship with the Israeli regime whereas Iran considers it to be an apartheid state, almost identical to that of apartheid South Africa. Or for example the Syrian government position regarding Israel is different from that of Iran's. The official Syrian position is that the West Bank and Gaza Strip must be returned to the Palestinians, in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions, and that the occupied Golan Heights have to be handed back to the Syrian people, which are legitimate demands. But the Iranian position is different, Iran firmly believes that Israel is a colonial and apartheid regime and that it is morally unacceptable for it to exist in its present form. Therefore, at least officially, there are substantial differences. So people can interpret the Axis of Resistance in different ways. It is important to keep in mind that despite Syria, Iran, Turkey and Qatar are also moving closer together partially thanks to US, Saudi, and UAE hostility towards the Muslim Brotherhood. What is important is that there is a growing consensus about key issues in this region and what the major problems are, and I think that as time goes on this loose alliance of countries and movements is growing more influential and more powerful. I cannot say whether there will be a formal or open collective security treaty or military alliance created by any of these countries in the near or foreseeable future and I do not see such a necessity. However, I think this convergence of ideas is very important and I think that the formal and informal links that exist between these countries is in many ways more important and more significant than formal political or military alliances or security treaties.

The Saker: In recent months a number of observers have stated that Russia and Israel are working hand in hand and some have gone as far as to say that Putin is basically a pawn of Netanyahu and that Russia is loyal to Israel and Zionists interests. Do you agree with this point of view? How do Iranian officials view the Russian contacts with the Israelis, does that worry them or do they believe that these contacts can be beneficial for the future of the region?

Professor Marandi: That is nonsense. The US and Israeli regimes are culturally and ideologically bound to one another, whereas the Americans have a deep antipathy towards Russia. That is why the Russians have a very different position on Syria than do the Americans and Israelis. The Israelis alongside the US, the EU, the Saudis, and some of Syria's neighboring countries, supported ISIS, Al Qaeda, and other extremist

entities and attempted to tear Syria apart. As explained earlier, the Russian view of Israel is different from Iran. There are many Russian Jewish immigrants in Israel and they constitute a large segment of the colonists in Palestine and they are largely utilized for the further subjugation of the Palestinian people and ethnic cleansing. Generally speaking, Russian interests are in sharp conflict with those of the United States, Israel's strongest ally. In addition, Russia's close relationship with Syria dates back to the cold war and the relentless US pressure on China and Russia has also acted as a strong catalyst to quicken their convergence with one another as well as with Iran on key issues. The Chinese and Russians know quite well that the United States, the Europeans, and regional countries have extensively used extremists in Syria to undermine the state and that those forces could later be used to undermine security in Central Asia, Russia, and China. A large number of Russian, Chinese, and Central Asians have been trained to fight in Syria, and this is a major threat to their collective security. The United States could use these and other extremists in an attempt to impede the potential success of the Belt and Road Initiative or other plans for Asian integration. Thus, there is a sharp and growing conflict between the Russians and the Americans.

The Israeli regime constantly tells the Russians and the Chinese that they are the gateway to Washington and that if they maintain strong ties with Israel, the Israelis can help them solve their problems with the United States. I do not think there is much truth to that, because this growing conflict is about the fate of US global dominance and there is nothing the Israelis can do to change that. Nevertheless, this has been used as an incentive for the Russians and the Chinese to maintain better relations with the Israeli regime.

In any case, Russia does not have to maintain identical views with Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, Lebanon, Iraq, or Yemen. Differences exist, but strong relationships exist nevertheless. All of these countries recognize that if the Americans are able to undermine any of them, whether it is Syria, Iran, Russia, or China, then that would only encourage the United States to be more aggressive towards the remaining countries that impede US foreign policy objectives or exist as potential rivals whether regionally or globally. So even though their political structures are different, even though their foreign policies are different, the similarities that exist are quite striking as well as the common threats. Again, to a large degree this coalition is a result of US and Western foreign policy, which has strong undercurrents of Eurocentricism, tribalism, and racism.

Not only has this pressure brought these countries and movements closer to one another, but it has also created a deeper understanding among them. The Russians understand Iran better today than they did 5 years ago, partially as a result of their cooperation in Syria. This greater understanding enhances the relationship, and helps to dispel many of the misunderstandings or myths that may exist about one another due to Eurocentric narratives and orientalism.

Hence, Iran is not concerned about Russian-Israeli relation. Obviously, in an ideal world Iran would like Russia to break relations with the Israeli regime for its apartheid nature. But reality is reality, and Iranian relations with Russia are very good and at times I am sure the Iranians send certain warnings to the Israelis through the Russians.

The Saker: How is Russia viewed in Iran? Are most Iranian still suspicious of Russia or do they believe that they have a viable and honest partner in Russia? What are the main reservations/concerns of patriotic Iranians when they think of Russia?

Professor Marandi: Historically, the Iranians have had serious problems with the Russians. The Russians and the Soviet Union interfered extensively in Iranian internal affairs and they undermined Iran's sovereignty. But ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union the image of Russia has changed. Especially since Russia began fighting alongside Iran in Syria in 2015, Russia's image has improved significantly. When we look at polls, Russia's image is pretty good compared to Western countries.

Western governments own or fund dozens of Persian language media outlets. These outlets, such as VOA and BBC Persian among others, are constantly spouting anti-Russian propaganda. Obviously they have an impact and that couples with historical Iranian concerns about Russia, but despite all that, the Russian image is relatively favorable and that says a lot.

The Saker: How about Turkey? Iran and Turkey have had a complex relationship in the past, yet in the case of the AngloZionist war against Syria, the two states have worked together (and with Russia) – does that mean that Turkey is seen as a viable and honest partner in Iran?

Professor Marandi: Iran's relationship with the Turkish government is complicated, especially, because of the constant policy changes that have occurred in

Turkey over the past few years. This has made the government seem unreliable in the eyes of many. Having said that, Turkey is very different from Wahhabi influenced regimes in the Arabian Peninsula. Turkish Islamic tradition has striking similarities with Iran's Islamic culture and because of its strong Sufi tradition, Turkey is much closer to Iran than it is to, for example, Wahhabi Saudi Arabia.

The global Wahhabi menace has grown as a result of Saudi financial support, as well as the support of other countries in the Persian Gulf region. Turkish society has been more resistant, although ever since the military conflict in Syria and due to extensive funding from the Persian Gulf, there has been growing concern about growing sectarianism in Turkey, not unlike what happened in Pakistan in the 1980s.

Ironically, before the conflict in Syria President Erdogan had a closer personal relationship with President Assad than did the Iranians. They and their families would spend vacations together.

In any case, Turkey has a very strong economic, political, and cultural relationship with Iran, and some of the rising anti-Shia and takfiri sentiments that have been on the rise in Turkey were stunted by the Saudi and Emirati support for the attempted coup in Turkey. Subsequently, their open antagonism towards the Muslim Brotherhood and Qatar, their support for the coup in Egypt, their policies in Sudan and Libya, and of course the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, have all had a beneficial impact on Iranian-Turkish relations. As a result, Turkey has grown much more distant from Iran's regional antagonists, while Turkish support for the Palestinian cause is another element that brings Iran and Turkey closer together. American support for PKK terrorists in Syria has also angered the Turks adding push to Turkish-Iranian convergence. Even Turkish policy towards Syria is evolving, although it is impossible for the government to make a radical change, because of years of attempts at regime change.

The Saker: Next, turning to Iraq, how would you characterize the “balance of influence” of Iran and the USA in Iraq? Should we view the Iraqi government as allied to Iran, allied to the USA or independent? If the Empire attacks Iran, what will happen in Iraq?

Professor Marandi: The relationship between Iraq and Iran is significantly more important than the relationship between Iraq and the United States. Iran and Iraq are allies, but this alliance does not contradict the notion of Iraqi independence. Iraq's

regional policy is not identical to Iran's. But the two countries have very similar interests, a very close relationship, many Iraqi leaders have spent years in Iran, and the bulk of the Iraqi population lives close to the shared border of over 1,200 km between the two countries. So trade, pilgrimage, and tourism are key to both countries. The religious similarities and the holy sites that exist in Iran and Iraq are a huge incentive for interaction between the two countries. There are many Iraqi students studying in Iran and many Iranian's working in Iraq. The fact that Iranians made many sacrifices when fighting ISIS in Iraq and many Iraqis were martyred in the war against ISIS and Al Qaeda in Syria is a strong indication of where things stand despite US pressure.

The Arba'een pilgrimage that takes place every year where millions of Iranians and Iraqis make the walk towards Karbala, side by side, with tens of thousands of Iraqi and Iranian volunteers helping pilgrims along the way is, I think, a further sign of the close relationship.

While the U.S presence in Iraq continues to be hegemonic, Iran has not sought to prevent Iraq from having normal relationships with other countries. However, the U.S continues to seek control over Iraq through the world's largest embassy, its military presence, and its influence over the bureaucracy. The United States continues to have much say over how the country's oil wealth is spent.

Still, despite the US colonial behavior, its continued theft of Iraqi oil wealth, and its thuggish behavior, the Iraqis have been able to assert a great deal of independence. In the long run, this continued US behavior is only going to create further resentment among Iraqis. The empire rarely takes these realities into account, they seek to accumulate influence and wealth through brute force, but in the long term it creates deep-rooted anger and hostility which, at some point, will create great problems for the empire, especially as this anger and unrest is growing across the region, if not across the globe.

It is highly unlikely that the regime in Washington will attack Iran, if it does it will bring about a regional war, which will drive the United States out of Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Syria. Saudi Arabia and the Emirates would, swiftly collapse and the price of oil and natural gas would go through the roof, leading to a global economic meltdown even as millions of people will be streaming towards Europe.

The Saker: It is often said that Russia and Iran have fundamentally different goals in Syria and that the two countries regularly have tensions flaring up between

them because of these disagreements. Is that true? In your opinion, how are Russian and Iranian goals in Syria different?

Professor Marandi: The news that we sometimes hear about serious tensions existing between the Iranians and the Russians in Syria is often nonsense. There are clear reasons for people to exaggerate small incidents or to fabricate them altogether, but the relationship is quite good. Iran does not intend to have any military bases in Syria, whereas the Russians do feel the need to preserve their military presence in Syria through long-term agreements.

But ultimately, Iran would like to help enable Syria to acquire the military capability to retake the occupied Golan Heights. Iran does not intend to initiate any conflict with the Israeli regime inside Palestine. That is not an objective in Lebanon and that is not an objective in Syria. As in Lebanon, where the Iranians supported Hezbollah to restore the country's sovereignty and to drive out the Israeli aggressors and occupiers, the Iranians have the same agenda in Syria. They want to support the Syrians so that they will be able to restore full sovereignty. I don't believe the Golan Heights is a priority for the Russians.

The Saker: For a while, Iran let the Russian Aerospace Forces use an Iranian military airfield, then when this became public knowledge, the Russians were asked to leave. I have heard rumors that while the IRGC was in favor of allowing Russian Aerospace Forces to use an Iranian military airfield, the regular armed forces were opposed to this. Is it true that there are such differences between the IRGC and the regular armed forces and do you think that Iran will ever allow the Russian military to have a permanent presence in Iran?

Professor Marandi: That is a myth. The Russians were not asked to leave. There were no differences between the IRGC and any other part of the armed forces. This was a decision made by the Supreme National Security Council and the President and all the major commanders in the military were involved in this decision. Actually, the airbase does not belong to the guards it belongs to the air force and a part of the base was used for Russian strategic bombers that were flying to Syria to bomb the extremists. This cooperation ended when the Russians were able to station adequate numbers of aircraft in Syria, because the flights over Iran were long and expensive, whereas the air campaign launched from bases inside Syria was much less expensive and much more effective. Iran was very open about its relationship with the Russians, and openly permitted the Russians to fire missiles over Iranian airspace. There were

those who were opposed to the Russian presence in the Iranian airbase. A small segment of Iranian society that is pro-Western and pro-American complained about it in their media outlets, but they had absolutely no impact on the decision-making process. According to polls, an overwhelming majority of Iranians supported Iran's activities in Syria, and the Supreme National Security Council was under no pressure to its decision. However, Iran does not plan to allow any country to have permanent bases in the country and that is in accordance with the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The revolution in Iran was about independence, dignity, sovereignty and indigenous values, and the removal of American hegemony over Iran was very much a part of that. The Iranians will not give any basis to foreign powers in future, and neither the Russians nor the Chinese have ever made such requests. There are absolutely no differences regarding Iran's regional policies between the IRGC and the rest of the military, both were a part of the decision-making process when the Russians were allowed to fire missiles over Iranian territory and both were part of the process in allowing Russian aircraft to use Iranian airspace. The Russian bombers were providing air support for Iranian troops and Iranian affiliated troops on the ground.

The Saker: Both Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah have made repeated statements that the days of the racist ZioApartheid regime in occupied are numbered. Do you agree with their point of view and, if yes, how do you see such a regime change actually happening? Which of the One State solution or a Two State solution do you believe to be more realistic?

Professor Marandi: 8- I do not believe the two-state solution is possible because the Israeli regime has colonized too much of the West Bank. Actually, through acts of selfishness and petty short-term gain, the regime has damaged itself enormously. As a result of the colonization of the West Bank, even the European elites and diplomats who would privately admit that the Israeli regime pursues apartheid policies and who would always speak of hope for a two-state solution, admit that the two state solution is dead. All Palestinians are treated as sub humans, whether they reside in the West Bank or not. They are a subjugated nation, whether they are Israeli citizens or not. However, there is no longer any hope that those who live in the occupied West Bank will gain freedom, even though we predicted the Israelis would never voluntarily relinquish the West bank. This is the most important challenge that the regime faces in the future. By colonizing the West Bank and despite official western media and government narratives, it is increasingly seen by the international community as the

apartheid regime that it is. It is delegitimizing itself in the eyes of larger numbers of people.

In addition to that, it can no longer behave with impunity. The 2006 war in Lebanon where the Israeli armed forces were defeated by Hizbullah was a turning point. Before then, the Israelis had created an image that they were invincible. But now even in Gaza, they are unable to carry out their objectives when they periodically attack the territory and its civilians. The Israelis are now more easily contained especially since the Syrian government has been able to restore order and expel ISIS and al-Qaeda from areas neighboring Israeli forces on the occupied Golan Heights, despite the Israelis supporting the extremists. The Israelis have been contained regionally, at home they are increasingly seen as an apartheid regime. Its regional allies are also on the decline and regionally. Saudi Arabia and the UAE are the only countries that can be considered as effective allies and they are facing a potential terminal decline. Therefore, regionally the regime is becoming more isolated. I do not believe that under such circumstances, the Israeli regime can last for very long. Just as the apartheid regime in South Africa collapsed under the burden of its own immoral existence, the Israeli regime will not last. There will be no two-state solution, the only realistic and moral solution is for Palestine to be united and for the indigenous population to have its rights restored, whether they are Palestinians, Jews or Christians or anyone else who is indigenous to the land.

The Saker: Iran is an Islamic Republic. It is also a majority Shia country. Some observers accuse Iran of wanting to export its political model to other countries. What do you make of that accusation? Do Iranian Islamic scholars believe that the Iranian Islamic Republic model can be exported to other countries, including Sunni countries?

Professor Marandi: 9-I do not think that there is any validity to that accusation. Iran has a very excellent relationship with Iraq, but it has not imposed its model on the country. In fact, Iran helped create the current constitution of that country. The same is true for Lebanon and Yemen. Iran is constantly accused by its antagonists, but in the most inconsistent ways. Elsewhere they claim that Iran is afraid of their model being exported because they are fearful of rivals. Iran has always been attacked from all sides often using self-contradictory arguments. On the one hand, the so-called regime is allegedly immensely unpopular, it is corrupt, it is falling apart, and it is incapable of proper governance. Yet on the other hand, Iran is a growing threat to the

region and even the world. This is paradoxical, how can Iran be incompetent and collapsing on the one hand, yet a growing threat to the whole world on the other hand? This simply does not make sense. Nevertheless, I have seen no evidence that Iran has tried to impose its model on other countries or on movements that are close to it. If it was not for Iran's support, ISIS and al-Qaeda would have overthrown Syria with its secular government and secular constitution. Iranians firmly believed that the terrorist forces supported by Western intelligence services as well as regional regimes were the worst case scenario for the Syrian people. Did they impose their model?

The Saker: thank you for all your answers!

Bibi in Banderastan, or the importance of words

August 28, 2019

Israeli Prime Minister made it to Kiev today, where he was greeted by the (pseudo) “traditional” *Ukronazi* slogan “*Glory to the Ukraine! Glory to the heroes!*”. For somebody like me who dislikes *Zionism* and *Nazism* just about the same, it was a sweet irony to see an *Israeli* Prime Minister officially traveling to the *Nazi-occupied* Ukraine to commemorate the massacre of Jews at [Babii Iar](#) greeted by the very same slogan which the *Jews* murdered at Babii Iar heard from their *Banderite* executioners while they were being shot.

STOP!

Do you already hear the choir of voices protesting: how can anyone expecting to be taken seriously write a paragraph about the civil war in the Ukraine with all the following words: Ukronazi, Zionism, Nazism, Nazi-occupied, Jews and Banderite?

That is a very good question.

But I have a better one!

How can anyone expecting to be taken seriously write a paragraph about the civil war in the Ukraine *WITHOUT* all the following words: Ukronazi, Zionism, Nazism, Nazi-occupied, Jews and Banderite?

Let’s begin with the first question. The obvious implied criticism behind the first question, is very simple and it assumes that there is a profound and inherent contradiction between everything Nazi and Jews/Zionism. Speaking about a “Nazi Jew” or a “Nazi Zionist” is just as nonsensical as speaking about dry water or diamonds raining from the sky!

Except that both [dry water](#) and [diamonds raining from the sky](#) *do* exist in real nature, so let’s not jump to conclusions too fast and see which contradictions are real, and which ones are only apparent.

I won’t even go into the (deliciously controversial) topic of the historical fact of the collaboration of the German National Socialists with various Zionist organizations which, rather naively, thought that a nationalist like Hitler would understand their

own nationalism and help them to emigrate to Palestine. But this goes even further than that as Hannah Arendt said, in her superb book “[Eichmann in Jerusalem](#)” (see excerpt [here](#) or, even better, [read the full book](#) (for free!)): various Jewish organizations continued to work with/(for?) the Nazis well into the so-called “Holocaust”.

[Sidebar: to be honest, I don't think that we, safely sitting in the comfort of our homes, should be too quick to condemn these Jewish organizations. Yes, of course, many of them were “naive” (and I am being polite here), but others must have realized that European Jews are in a great deal of danger and must be evacuated at any cost and if the only way to achieve such an evacuation was to deal with the Nazis, then so be it! This is no different than offering a bribe to a jail guard to obtain some kind of favor. Thus I think that Jewish organizations which today categorically deny having collaborated with the Nazis are mistaken on not one, but two grounds: first, the truth is coming out and it is impossible to suppress it and, second, there is nothing shameful in swallowing your disgust to save a person. Except that for the racially deluded minds of modern Zionists, such an admission would take the air out of their silly notion of racial superiority. Hence the categorically crimethink nature of speaking about this]

No, what I want to suggest here is very different: in our 21st century, most of the 20th century terminology has lost its meaning. What is a liberal (no, not Hillary!)? What is a Communist (no, not Obama!)? What is a Christian (no, not the Pope!)? What is a democrat (no, not Kamala Harris!)? What is a patriot (no, most definitely not Trump!)? What is a tyrannical dictator (nope, not Putin!)?

You think that I am being facetious here?

Then explain to me how a rabidly Takfiri regime like the one in Saudi Arabia can get help from Zionist Israel? Or how the “democratic West” gave its full support to Takfiris in Chechnia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Libya and Syria? How is it that during the so-called “Global War on Terror”, (which was supposed to be officially waged against al-Qaeda and its various local subsidiaries, in retaliation for 9/11) the various Takfiri groups only got stronger? Yet what we really see is that the US provides training, financing, coordination and even close air support for pretty much every al-Qaeda type out there?

There are two phenomena which explain this gradual dissolution of meanings into meaningless and insipid categories: first, the correct meaning of many terms has been covered by a thick layer of ideological imperatives and, second, most 21st century politicians couldn't care less what any word really means. All they care about is framing the discussion in a way which makes it easy for them to obfuscate their numerous crimes.

The truth about the Ukraine is very simple: yes, there are bona-fide Nazis in the Ukraine and, yes, they have a lot of influence due to their quasi monopoly on violence and total collapse of the state. True, these hardcore Ukronazi freaks are a rather small minority, but one which is well organized, well funded and fully prepared to use violence.

There are also a lot of Zionists in the Ukraine. And while these folks silently hate each other, they hate (and fear!) Russia much, much more; just like mobsters can fight each other, but can unite against any common threat (such as, say, an honest police chief).

Oh, and yes, there are also plenty of very influential Jews in the Ukraine (Kolomoiskii and Zelenskii being the two best known ones right now) and they have the full backing of the AngloZionist Empire and all of the Zionists interests in the West. And I think that most folks fully understand that. The real reason behind all the protests about me using terms such as "Ukronazi" stems from a very different cause.



The problem is that you get a lot of ruffled feathers when you suggest that the USA, which is supposed to be some kind of "land of the free and the home of the brave" aka "the indispensable nation" is found in bed with the self same folks who the US propaganda machine paints as arch-villains: Nazis, of course, but also Takfiris. As for the Zionists, it would be wrong to say that the US of A is "in bed" with them. No, it's even worse: the much-maligned and ridiculed term of ZOG (as in "Zionist Occupation Government") is much more accurate, but it offends those who rather think of themselves as "rulers of the world" than the voiceless serfs of a regime of foreign occupation!

US Americans love to thump their chests while mantrically chanting some nonsense along the lines of “USA is number 1!” and they get really mad when they are told that “the party is over” which I did in [this article](#) in which I wrote: “*Both US Americans and Europeans will, for the very first time in their history, have to behave like civilized people, which means that their traditional “model of development” (ransacking the entire planet and robbing everybody blind) will have to be replaced by one in which these US Americans and Europeans will have to work like everybody else to accumulate riches*”

And, just by coincidence, Paul Craig Roberts recently wrote an article entitled “[American Capitalism Is Based On Plunder](#)” in which he explained that US foreign policy is basically driven by a plunder imperative and that if that imperative cannot be realized abroad, it will be implemented at home (I wonder if he will be accused of being anti-American or even of “Communism”? It is quite striking to see a paleo-conservative like Paul Craig Roberts basically paraphrasing Lenin and his statement that “*imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism*” (a historical truism which the western propaganda system is doing its best to bury, obfuscate, ridicule and the like).

Writing things like these typically result in a barrage of *ad hominem*s which, by itself, is quite telling (usually the same 2-3 folks, some probably remunerated for their efforts) There is a Russian saying that “*the hat of the head of the thief is burning*” (see [here](#) for an explanation of this rather weird expression) and this is exactly what is happening here: the folks protesting the loudest are always the ones who are most unwilling to stop the planetary plunder, messianic arrogance and imperial hubris in which they were raised. It is not only their livelihoods which are threatened by such talk, but even their very identity. Hence the very real and very high level of rage they feel.

Finally, there are all the Nazi sympathizers who absolutely hate Jews and for whom any notion of Nazi and Zionist collaboration are just as much a case of crimethink as it is for Zionist Jews to admit that they have collaborated with bona fide Nazis many times in the past.

However, if we set aside silly ideological shackles, we can immediately observe that the kind of ideology of racial superiority which the Nazis are known for can also be found in the Judaic (religious) and Zionist (secular) ideologies. In fact, both National-

Socialism and Zionism are just two amongst many more types of European nationalisms which have their root in 19th century ideological categories.

Let's try a different approach: what do Ukie “*dobrobats*”, al-Qaeda forces in Syria, KLA units in Kosovo and Israeli settlers in Palestine have in common? Correct! They are all first and foremost ***thugs*** who all prey on the weak and defenseless. In other words, they are the perfect tool to force civilians to surrender and accept some kind of foreign rule. That foreign rule is, in each case, the one of the AngloZionist Empire, of course. This, in turn, means that their official ideologies are almost irrelevant, because in reality they are all servants of the Empire (whether they understand it or not).

Conclusion one: it's all a big lie!

Yes, it is a big lie. All of it. And this is how we end up with an Israeli Prime Minister who, by any criteria, is not only a Fascist, but also a Nazi as long as we make it clear that his brand of Nazism is a Jewish one, not a Germanic one. And it's not just Bibi Netanyahu who does not mind dealing with Ukronazis, so the the the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine (see [here](#) for details). As for the said Ukronazis, they are now [trying hard to deny that Bandara and his gang massacred Jews during WWII](#). As for Zelenskii, he is most definitely not a Nazi, but he has already caved in to the Ukronazi ideology (i.e. a form of Nazism which substitutes myths about “ancient Ukr” to the more traditional Germanic myths about the Aryan-Germanic “race”). Then there is Kolomoiskii who is simply a typical Jewish mobster who has no personal ideology whatsoever and who has no love for the *bona fide* Ukronazis, but who is being very careful about how to purge them from power lest they beat him [yet again](#). And above them all, we have the leaders of the Empire who use ideological categories as slurs but who don't give a damn who they back as long as it is against Russia.

Against this background it is worth asking a simple question: do these words even matter? Do they still have any kind of meaning?

Conclusion two: yes, words do still matter!

I believe that they do, very much so! This is precisely why the legacy corporate ziomedia and those brainwashed by it freak out when they see expressions such as “AngloZionist”, “Ukronazi” or even the rather demure “Israel Lobby”. When somebody comes up with a powerful and correct descriptor, say like “ZOG” – the propaganda machine immediately kicks into high gear to shoot down in flames whatever author

and article dared to use it. In fact, there are at least two types of wannabe word censors which typically show up:

TYPE ONE: the real McCoy. These are the sincere folks (whether of the Nazi or Zionist persuasion) who are truly outraged and offended that such “hallowed” words as Nazi/Zionist (pick one) can be combined with “abominations” such as Nazi/Zionist (pick the other one). These are all the Third Reich nostalgics, the defenders of a “White Christian West” and all the rest of them neo-Nazis.

TYPE TWO: the paid trolls. These are the folks whose task it is to obfuscate the real issues, to bury them under tons of vapid ideological nonsense; the best way to do that is to misdirect any discussion away from the original topic and sidetrack it into either a barrage of *ad hominem*s or ideological clichés.

Seriously, what we are witnessing today is a new age of censorship in which government and corporations work hand in hand to crush (ban, censor, demonetize, algorithmically purge and otherwise silence) all those who challenge the official ideology and its many narratives. It would be naïve to the extreme to assume that the so-called “alternative media” and blogosphere have been spared such an effort at silencing ideological heresies.

Next time these self-appointed enforcers of the politically correct *doxa* come out, try this experiment: when you read their comments, don't just look at what they write, but also try to guess *why* they write what they write and then mentally place a T1 or T2 sign next to their comments and you will soon see that they follow a careful pattern :-)

The Saker

Kidnapping as a tool of imperial statecraft?

September 06, 2019

There is nothing new about empires taking hostages and using them to put pressure on whatever rebel group needs to be reminded “who is boss”. The [recent arrest in Italy of Alexander Korshunov](#), the director for business development at Russia’s United Engine Corporation (UEC), is really nothing new but just the latest in a long string of kidnappings. And, as [I already mentioned in distant 2017](#), that kind of thuggery is not a sign of strength but, in fact, a sign of weakness. Remember [Michael Ledeen’s immortal words](#) about how “*Every ten years or so, the United States needs to pick up some small crappy little country and throw it against the wall, just to show the world we mean business*”? Well, you could say that this latest spat of kidnappings is indicative of the same mindset and goal, just on a much smaller, individual, scale. And, finally, it ain’t just Russia. We all know about the [kidnapping of Huawei’s CFO Meng Wanzhou by the Canadian authorities](#).

By the way, you might wonder how can I speak of “kidnapping” when, in reality, these were legal arrests made by the legitimate authorities of the countries in which these arrests were made? Simple! [As I mentioned last week](#), *words matter* and to speak of an “arrest” in this case wrongly suggests that

1. some crime was committed (when in reality there is **ZERO** evidence of that, hence the talk of “conspiracy” to do something illegal)
2. that this crime was investigated and that the authorities have gathered enough evidence to justify an arrest and
3. that the accused will have a fair trial.

None of that applies to the cases of Viktor Bout, Konstantin Iaroshenko, Marina Butina or, for that matter, Meng Wanzhou or Wang Weijing. The truth is that these so-called “arrests” are simple kidnappings, the goal is hostage taking with the goal to either

1. try to force Russia (and China) to yield to US demands or
2. try to “get back” at Russia (and China) following some humiliating climb down by the US Administration (this was also the real reason behind the uncivilized seizure of Russian diplomatic buildings in the USA).

This is not unlike what the Gestapo and the SS liked to do during WWII and their kidnapping of hostages was also called “arrest” by the then state propaganda machine.

By the way, the Bolsheviks also did a lot of that during the civil war, but on a much larger scale. In reality, both in the case of the Nazi authorities and in the case of the imperial USA, as soon as a person is arrested he/she is subjected to solitary confinement and other forms of psychological torture (Manning or Assange anybody?!) in order to either make them break or to at least show Russia and China that the US, being the World Hegemon gets to seize anybody worldwide, be it [by a CIA kidnapping team](#) or by using local colonial law enforcement authorities (aka local police forces).

US politicians love to “send messages” and this metaphor is used on a daily basis by US officials in all sorts of circumstances. Here the message is simple: *we can do whatever the hell we want, and there ain't nothing you can do about it!*

But is that last statement really true?

Well, in order to reply to this we should look at the basic options available to Russia (this also applies to China, but here I want to focus on the Russian side of the issue). I guess the basic list of options is pretty straightforward:

- Use official and confidential diplomatic channels to protest and demand a release
- [Publicly protest and denounce these kidnappings as completely illegal](#) (and immoral to boot!)
- Retaliate by using legal means (sanctions, cancellation of agreements, etc.)
- Retaliate by using extra-legal means (counter-kidnappings, not unlike what China allegedly decided to do in [the case of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor](#))

Frankly, in the case of the USA, options one and two are useless: the AngloZionist leaders have long given up any hope of not being hated and despised by 99% of mankind and they have long dropped any pretense of legality, nevermind morality: they don't give a damn what anybody thinks. Their main concern is to conceal their immense weakness, but they fail to do so time and time again. Truly, when wannabe “empires” can't even bring an extremely weakened country such as Venezuela to heel, there ain't much they can do to boot their credibility. If anything, this thuggery is nothing more than the evidence of [a mind-blowing weakness](#) of the Empire.

But that weakness in no way implies that Russia and China have good options. Sadly, they don't.

Russia can engage in various types of sanctions, ranging from the petty bureaucratic harassment of US representations, diplomats, businessmen and the like to economic and political retaliations. But let's not kid ourselves, there is very little Russia can do to seriously hurt the USA with such retaliations. Many would advocate retaliation in kind, but that poses a double problem for the Kremlin:

- Once a country has gone down the road of illegal brute force, there is no way back. The examples of the US, Israel or, for that matter, the Ukraine show that once primitive thuggery becomes part of your political arsenal you will forever remain a thug and everybody will see this (whether everybody will have the courage to openly state this is a different issue altogether).
- The reality is that double and triple standards have long become the essential key feature of all western ideological systems, from the Papacy to modern capitalism. The Kremlin fully understands that in the AngloZionist Empire "*some are more equal than others*" and that that which is "allowed" to the World Hegemon is categorically forbidden to everybody else. Thus if Russia retaliates in kind, there will be an explosion of hysterical protests not only by the western legacy corporate and state ziomedia, but also from the 5th columnist in the Russian "liberal" press.

And yes, unlike the USA, Russia does have a vibrant, diverse and pluralistic media and each time when Putin agrees to a press conference (especially one several hours long) he knows that he will be asked the tough, unpleasant, questions. But since he, unlike most western leaders, can intelligently answer them he does not fear them. As for Dmitrii Peskov and Maria Zakharova, they have heard it all a gazillion during the past years, including often the most ridiculously biased, mis-informed and outright ridiculous "questions" (accusations, really) from the western prostitute corps in Russia.

So yes, Russia could, in theory, retaliate by arresting US citizens in Russia (or by staging Cold War type provocations) or by kidnapping them abroad (Russia does have special forces trained for this kind of operation). But this is most unlikely to yield any meaningful results and it would create a PR nightmare for the Kremlin.

The truth is that in most of these cases we always come down to the fundamental dichotomy: on one hand we have a rogue state gone bonkers with imperial hubris, arrogance and crass ignorance (say, the USA and/or Israel) while on the other we have

states which try to uphold a civilized international order (Russia, China, Iran, etc.). This is by logical necessity a lop-sided struggle in which the thugs will almost always have the advantage.

*[Sidebar: here I want to address a logical fallacy which I regularly hear in the West: when one political system proves stronger, or more capable of survival, than another one, this supposedly proves that the stronger state is also somehow “superior”. This is the argument used by those who claim that the Soviet Union “lost the Cold War” and that “Capitalism has proven much more sustainable/efficient than Communism”. This is utter nonsense for at least two reasons: first, the USSR did not “lose” the Cold War – the CPSU and the Soviet ruling Nomenklatura decided to break-up the USSR (against the will of the people!) and, second, the fact is that the Soviet Union was squandering its wealth all over the planet while the USA was robbing the entire planet blind. How can we compare the two? Finally, allow me this metaphor to make my point: if we would lock up a human being and a hyena in a small empty cell to see who will survive we can be pretty darn sure that the hyena will immediately and very “effectively” kill the human and eat him. Does that “victory” somehow prove the hyena’s “superiority”? Of course not! For one thing, capitalism implies **infinite** growth in a **finite** environment, which is exactly what a **malignant tumor** does for a living and which is **self-evidently non-sustainable**. So are we going to compare one political system – Communism – which does not rely on growth and which is therefore sustainable, and which spread its wealth all over the planet with one based on (international) “highway robbery” (don’t take my word for it, take it from Paul Craig Roberts himself who unambiguously stated recently that “American Capitalism is Based on Plunder”). Yes, the Soviet system was fundamentally rotten, profoundly dysfunctional and ineffective (only imbeciles or ignoramuses would deny that!), but it was not in any way “defeated” by the West nor is Capitalism any “better” or “superior” (whatever you want that to mean) than Communism (more on this here if you are interested).]*

For all these reasons, there is really nothing much Russia (or China) can do about this situation besides publishing an official warning to the Russian people saying that if they travel abroad they should realize that “US intelligence agencies continue their current hunt for Russians around the world”. They also made public the list of countries which have extradition treaties with the USA: Australia, Austria, Albania, Antigua and

Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Belgium, Bulgaria, Bolivia, Brazil, United Kingdom, Hungary, Canada, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Dominica, Greece, Guyana, Haiti, Guatemala, Germany, Honduras, Greece, Israel, India, Jordan, Iraq, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia, Monaco, Myanmar, Nauru, Nigeria, Netherlands, Nicaragua, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, El Salvador, San Marino, Swaziland, Seychelles, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Tanzania, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Turkey, Uruguay, Philippines, Finland, France, Czech Republic, Chile, Switzerland, Sweden, Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Estonia, South Africa, South Korea, Jamaica and Japan.

The MoFA concluded by warning that “*The Russian foreign Ministry strongly urges all Russian citizens planning trips abroad to carefully weigh all the risks, especially if there is reason to assume the possibility of claims against them by American law enforcement agencies*”.

Some *caveat emptor* before buying your airline ticket, right?!

Conclusion: it will get a lot worse before it gets better

First, we need to always remember that kidnappings are just the latest manifestation of an overall pattern of thuggery by the USA. The attitude is pervasive, and US citizens are not free of this climate of thuggery. Another good example are the [outright bribes offered to the ships captains of Iran](#), to sail their crude carriers to somewhere where the US can literally pirate the carrier. Remember the amazing confession by Pompeo himself: “*We lied, we cheated, we stole.... it reminds you of the glory of the American experiment*”?

You don't?

Then here is a quick refresher:

It can almost be rewritten and expanded like this: *We lie, we cheat, we steal, we kidnap, we bribe, we extort, we pirate, then we threaten, and then we tell everyone how exceptionally morally superior we are.*



https://youtu.be/nk6FkYg_E5Y

Yet a certain limit has been crossed. It is as if their own belief in their own moral superiority has inverted to the extent that their own moral superiority is so big, and so certain, that any small actions of thuggery is allowed to them. This will not change any time soon and even the most innocent traveler must have awareness of this. This is why [the Chinese are now openly wondering if sending Chinese students to the USA is such a good idea after all.](#)

So the first thing we have to accept is that ***this pattern of thuggery will not stop***, if anything – it will expand.

Second, we have to also realize that there are no good options for the Russians or the Chinese. In fact, ***this is normal***: civilized actors often find themselves “out-gunned”, so to speak, by thugs, sociopaths and criminals. Over time, however, thuggery is always self-defeating because it is inevitably linked to a ***delusion of impunity***. As for civilized states, while it is true that they are at a fundamental disadvantage when faced by uncivilized thugs but, again, over time they eventually prevail if only because everybody always ends up fed up and disgusted with the thugs. Finally, while thuggery can seem attractive to people with sociopathic inclinations, most human beings need a higher ideal than just unbridled consumption to inspire them. Communism had (and I would argue, still has) this ability. Capitalism does not.

For the foreseeable future, however, we can only expect more of the same. Thanks to the ceaseless efforts of Obama and Trump the Empire is collapsing even faster than it normally would and we can expect that the current sequence of humiliating defeats for the USA (and, of course, Israel which has [its own humiliating wounds](#) to lick!) will continue and that the USA (and, of course, Israel!) will have to find more small targets (be it kidnapped Russian nationals or empty buildings in Syria) to kidnap or destroy and feel powerful again.

This will be revolting, disgusting and simply plain stupid.

But there is nothing Russia (or China) can do to stop it, at least not for the foreseeable future.

The Saker

President Macron's amazing admission

September 11, 2019

I don't know whether the supposedly Chinese curse really comes from China, but whether it does or not, we most certainly are cursed with living in some truly interesting times: [Iran won the first phase of the "tanker battle" against the AngloZionists](#), [Putin offered to sell Russian hypersonic missiles to Trump](#) (Putin has been trolling western leaders a lot lately) while Alexander Lukashenko took the extreme measure of [completely shutting down the border between the Ukraine and Belarus](#) due to the huge influx of weapons and nationalist extremists from the Ukraine. As he put it himself "*if weapons fall into the hands of ordinary people and especially nationalist-minded people, wait for terrorism*". He is quite right, of course. Still, there is a sweet irony here, or call it karma if you prefer, but for the Ukonazis who promised their people a visa-free entrance into the EU (for tourism only, and if you have money to spend, but still...), and yet 5 years into that obscene experiment of creating a rabidly russophobic Ukraine and 100 days (or so) into Zelenskii's presidency, we have the Ukraine's closest and most supportive neighbor forced to totally shut down its border due to the truly phenomenal toxicity of the Ukrainian society! But, then again, the Ukraine is such a basket-case that we can count on "most interesting" things (in the sense of the Chinese curse, of course) happening there too.

[Sidebar: interestingly, one of the people the Ukrainians gave up in this exchange was Vladimir Tsemakh, a native of the Donbass who was kidnapped by the Ukie SBU in Novorussia (our noble "Europeans" did not object to such methods!) and declared the "star witness" against Russia in the MH-17 (pseudo-)investigation. Even more pathetic is that [the Dutch apparently fully endorsed this load of crapola](#). Finally, and just for a good laugh, check out how the infamous' [Bellincat presented Tsemakh](#). And then, suddenly, everybody seemed to "forget" that "star witness" and now the Ukies have sent him to Russia. Amazing how fast stuff gets lost in the collective western memory hole...]

Right now there seems to be a tug of war taking place between the more mentally sane elements of the Zelenskii administration and the various nationalist extremists in the SBU, deathsquads and even regular armed forces. Thus we see these apparently contradictory developments taking place: on one hand, the Ukraine finally agreed to a prisoner swap with Russia (a painful one for Russia as Russia mostly traded real

criminals, including a least *two bona fide* Ukie terrorists, against what are mostly civilian hostages. But Putin decided – correctly I think – that freeing Russian nationalists from Ukie jails was more important in this case) while on the other hand, the Ukronazi armed forces increased their shelling, even with 152mm howitzers which fire 50kg high explosive fragmentation shells, against the Donbass. Whatever may be the case, this prisoner swap, no matter how one-sided and unfair, is a positive development which might mark the beginning of a pragmatic and less ideological attitude in Kiev.

Some very cautious beginnings of a little hint of optimism might be in order following that exchange, but the big stuff seems to be scheduled for the meeting of the Normandy Group (NG), probably in France. So far, the Russians have made it very clear that they will not meet just for the hell of meeting, and that the only circumstance in which the Russians will



Urkoterrorists Sentsov and Kol'chenko

agree to a NG meeting would be if it has a good chance of yielding meaningful results which, translated from Russian diplomatic language simply means “if/when Kiev stops stonewalling and sabotaging everything”. Specifically, the Russians are demanding that Zelenskii commit, in writing, to the so-called “[Steinmeier formula](#)” and that the Ukrainian forces withdraw from the line of contact. Will that happen? Maybe. We shall soon find out.

But the single most amazing event of the past couple of weeks was the absolutely astonishing speech French President Emmanuel Macron made in front of an assembly of ambassadors. I could not find the full speech translated into English (I may have missed it somewhere), so I will post the crucial excerpts in French and translate them myself. If I find a full official translation I will post it under this column ASAP. For the time being, this is the link to the full speech transcript in French:

<https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2019/08/27/discours-du-president-de-la-republique-a-la-conference-des-ambassadeurs-1>

Let’s immediately begin with some of the most incredible excerpts, emphasis added by me: (sorry for the long quote but, truly, each word counts!)

*L'ordre international est bousculé de manière inédite mais surtout avec, si je puis dire, un **grand bouleversement** qui se fait sans doute pour **la première fois dans notre histoire** à peu près dans tous les domaines, avec une **magnitude profondément historique**. C'est d'abord une transformation, une recomposition géopolitique et stratégique. **Nous sommes sans doute en train de vivre la fin de l'hégémonie occidentale sur le monde**. Nous nous étions habitués à un ordre international qui depuis le 18ème siècle reposait sur une hégémonie occidentale, vraisemblablement française au 18ème siècle, par l'inspiration des Lumières ; sans doute britannique au 19ème grâce à la révolution industrielle et raisonnablement américaine au 20ème grâce aux 2 grands conflits et à la domination économique et politique de cette puissance. Les choses changent. Et elles sont profondément bousculées **par les erreurs des Occidentaux dans certaines crises, par les choix aussi américains depuis plusieurs années** et qui n'ont pas commencé avec cette administration mais qui conduisent à revisiter certaines implications dans des conflits au Proche et Moyen-Orient et ailleurs, et à repenser une stratégie profonde, diplomatique et militaire, et parfois des éléments de solidarité dont nous pensions qu'ils étaient des intangibles pour l'éternité même si nous avons constitué ensemble dans des moments géopolitiques qui pourtant aujourd'hui ont changé. Et puis **c'est aussi l'émergence de nouvelles puissances dont nous avons sans doute longtemps sous-estimé l'impact. La Chine au premier rang mais également la stratégie russe menée, il faut bien le dire, depuis quelques années avec plus de succès**. J'y reviendrai. L'Inde qui émerge, ces nouvelles économies qui deviennent aussi des puissances pas seulement économiques mais politiques et qui se pensent comme certains ont pu l'écrire, comme de véritables **États civilisations** et qui viennent non seulement bousculer notre ordre international, qui viennent peser dans l'ordre économique mais qui viennent aussi repenser l'ordre politique et l'imaginaire politique qui va avec, avec beaucoup de force et beaucoup plus d'inspiration que nous n'en avons. **Regardons l'Inde, la Russie et la Chine. Elles ont une inspiration politique beaucoup plus forte que les Européens aujourd'hui. Elles pensent le monde avec une vraie logique, une vraie philosophie, un imaginaire que nous avons un peu perdu***

Here is my informal translation of these words:

*The international order is being shaken in an unprecedented manner, above all with, if I may say so, the **great upheaval** that is undoubtedly taking place for **the first time in our history**, in almost every field and with a **profoundly historic magnitude**. The first thing we observe is a major transformation, a geopolitical and strategic re-composition. **We are undoubtedly experiencing the end of Western hegemony over the world**. We were accustomed to an international order which, since the 18th century, rested on a Western hegemony, mostly French in the 18th century, by the inspiration of the Enlightenment; then mostly British in the 19th century thanks to the Industrial Revolution and, finally, mostly American in the 20th century thanks to the 2 great conflicts and the economic and political domination of this power. Things change. And they are now deeply shaken **by the mistakes of Westerners in certain crises, by the choices that have been made by Americans for several years**, which did not start with this administration, but which lead to revisiting certain implications in conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere, and to rethinking a deep, diplomatic and military strategy, and sometimes elements of solidarity that we thought were intangible for eternity, even if we had constituted together in geopolitical moments that have changed. And then there is **the emergence of new powers whose impact we have probably underestimated for a long time**. **China is at the forefront, but also the Russian strategy, which has, it must be said, been pursued more successfully in recent years**. I will come back to that. India that is emerging, these new economies that are also becoming powers, not only economic but political and that think themselves, as some have written, as **real “civilizational states” which now come not only to shake up our international order** but who also come to weigh in on the economic order and to rethink the political order and the political imagination that goes with it, with much dynamism and much more inspiration than we have. **Look at India, Russia and China. They have a much stronger political inspiration than Europeans today. They think about our planet with a true logic, a true philosophy, an imagination that we’ve lost a little bit.***

Now let’s unpack these key statements one by one:

1) “ **great upheaval that is undoubtedly taking place for the first time in our history in almost every field and with a profoundly historic magnitude**”

Here Macron sets the stage for some truly momentous observations: what will be discussed next is not only a major event, but one without precedent in history (whether French or European). Furthermore, what will be discussed next, affects “almost every field” and with huge historical implications.

2) ***“We are undoubtedly experiencing the end of Western hegemony over the world”***

When I read that, my first and rather infantile reaction was to exclaim “*really?! No kiddin’?! Who would have thought!?*” After all, some of us have been saying that for a long, long while, but never-mind that. ***What is important is that even a Rothschild-puppet like Macron had to finally speak these words.*** Oh sure, he probably felt as happy as the Captain of the Titanic when he had to (finally!) order a general evacuation of this putatively unsinkable ship, but nonetheless – he did do it. From now on, the notion of the end of the western hegemony on the planet is no more relegated to what the leaders of the Empire and their propaganda machine like to call “fringe extremists” and has now fully entered the (supposedly) “respectable” and “mainstream” public discourse. This is a huge victory for all of us who have been saying the same things for years already.

3) ***“by the mistakes of Westerners in certain crises, by the choices that have been made by Americans for several years”***

Here, again, I feel like engaging in some petty self-congratulation and want to say “I told you that too!”, but that would really be infantile, would it not? But yeah, while the internal contradictions of western materialism in general, and of AngloZionist Capitalism specifically, have been catching up with the Western World and while an eventual catastrophic crisis was inevitable, it also sure is true that ***western leaders mostly did it to themselves***; at the very least, they dramatically accelerated these processes. In this context, I would single out the following politicians for a nomination of a medal for exceptional service in the destruction of the western hegemony over our long-suffering planet: Donald Trump and Barak Obama, of course, but also François Hollande and Emmanuel Macron (yes, he too even if he now changes his tune!), Angela Merkel, of course, and then last but not least, every single British Prime Minister since Margaret Thatcher (maybe with special commendation for Teresa May). Who knows, maybe they were all KGB/GRU/SVR agents after all? (just kiddin’!)

4) ***“ the emergence of new powers whose impact we have probably underestimated for a long time. China is at the forefront, but also the Russian strategy, which has, it must be said, been pursued more successfully in recent years”***

Next, it's not only China. Russia too is a major competitor, and a very successful one at that, hence the admission that in spite of all the efforts of the AngloZionist elites, not only did the Empire not succeed in breaking Russia but Russia has been very successful in defeating the western efforts. To those interested, I highly recommend [this article](#) by Jon Hellevig on the true state of the Russian economy. Finally, in military terms, Russia has achieved more than parity. In fact, I would argue that at least in terms of quality, the Russian armed forces are ahead in several crucial technologies (hypersonic missiles, air defenses, electronic warfare etc.) even while she still lags behind in other technologies (mostly truly obsolete things like aircraft carriers). But most crucial is the political victory of Russia: ***five years after the Euromaidan and the liberation of Crimea from the Nazi yoke, the USA is far more isolated than Russia.*** It's comical, really!

5) ***“real “civilizational states” which now come not only to shake up our international order”***

I have been speaking about a unique, and very distinct, “Russian civilizational realm” in many of my writings and I am quite happy to see Macron using almost the same words. Of course, Macron did not only mean Russia here, but also India and China. Still, and although the Russian nation is much younger than the one of China or, even more so India, 1000 years of Russian civilization does deserve to be listed next to these two other giants of world history. And what is absolutely certain is that China and India could never build the new international order they want without Russia, at least for the foreseeable future. In spite of all the very real progress made recently by the Chinese armed forces (and, to a lesser degree, also the Indian ones), Russia still remains a much stronger military power than China. What Russia, China and India are, is that they are all former empires which have given up on imperialism and who now only aspire to be powerful but nevertheless “normal” nations. Just by their size and geography, these are “un-invadable” countries who all present a distinct model of development and who want a multi-polar international order which would allow them to safely achieve their goals. In other words, Macron understands that the future international order will be dictated by China, Russia and India and not by any combination of western powers. Quite an admission indeed!

6) “ *Look at India, Russia and China. They have a much stronger political inspiration than Europeans today. They think about our planet with a true logic, a true philosophy, an imagination that we’ve lost a little bit.*”

This is the “core BRICS” challenge to the Empire: China and Russia have already established what the Chinese call a “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era”. If they can now extend this kind of informal but extremely profound partnership (I think of it as “symbiotic”) to India next, then the BRICS will have a formidable future (especially after the Brazilian people give the boot to Bolsonaro and his US patrons). Should that fail and should India chose to remain outside this unique relationship, then the SCO will become the main game in town. And yes, Macron is spot on: China and, especially, Russia have a fundamentally different worldview and, unlike the western one, theirs does have “much stronger political” goals (Macron used the word “aspirations”), “a real philosophy and imagination” which the West has lost, and not just a “little bit” but, I would argue, completely. But one way or the other, and for the first time in 1000 years, the future of our planet will not be decided anywhere in the West, not in Europe (old or “new”), but in Asia, primarily by the Russian-Chinese alliance. As I explained [here](#), the AngloZionist Empire is probably the last one in history, definitely the last western one.

Now we should not be naïve here, Macron did not suddenly find religion, grow a conscience or suddenly become an expert on international relations. There is, of course, a cynical reason why he is changing his tune. In fact, there are several such reasons. First, it appears that the on and off bromance between Macron and Trump is over. Second, all of Europe is in free fall socially, economically and, of course, politically. And with a total nutcase in power in London dealing with Brexit and with Angela Merkel’s apparently never-ending political agony, it is only logical for a French head of state to try to step in. Furthermore, while I have always said that Russia is not part of Europe culturally and spiritually, Russia is very much part of Europe geographically, economically and politically and there is simply no way for any imaginable alliance of European states to save Europe from its current predicament without Russian help. Like it or not, that is a fact, irrespective of whether politician or commentator X, Y or Z realizes this or not. Macron probably figured out that the so-called “East Europeans” are nothing but cheap prostitutes doing whatever Uncle Shmuel wants them to do, Germany is collapsing under the weight of Merkel’s “brilliant” immigration policy while the UK under BoJo is busy trying to self-destruct at least as fast as the USA under Trump. Macron is right. If united, Russia and France

could build a much safer Europe than the one we see slowly and painfully dying before our eyes today. But he is also wrong if he thinks that Russia can be “re-invited” back into the AngloZionist sphere of influence. In that context, [Putin’s reply](#) to the question of whether Russia was willing to return to the G8 is very telling: first he said that if the G7 wants to come back to Russia, Putin would welcome that, but then he also added that the G7/8 is useless without, yes, you guessed it, China and India.

It will be interesting to see if the current G7 will ever agree to mutate into a new G10 which would make Russia, China and India the most powerful block (or voting group) of this new forum. I personally doubt it very much, but then they are becoming desperate and Macron’s words seem to be indicating that this option is at least being discussed behind closed doors. Frankly, considering how quickly the G7 is becoming utterly irrelevant, I expect it to be gradually phased out and replaced by the (objectively much more relevant) G20.

Finally, there are Trump’s efforts into getting Russia back into the G8 which are very transparently linked to the current trade war and geostrategic competition between the US and China. The offer is useless to Russia, just like the return to PACE, but Russia does not want to needlessly offend anybody and that is why Putin did not publicly rebuff Trump or directly refuse to come to Miami: instead, he approved of the general concept, but offered a better way to go about it. Typical Putin.

Conclusion: Macron reads the writing on the wall

Whatever his political motives to say what he said, Macron is no idiot and neither are his advisors. Neither is this a “one off” thing. The French meant every word Macron spoke and they are putting everybody on notice (including the Ukrainians, the US, the EU and the Russians, of course). In fact, [Macron has already invited Putin to participate in a Normandy Format meeting in Paris](#) in the very near future. If that meeting eventually does take place, this will mean that the organizers gave Putin guarantees that this will not just be the usual kaffeeklatsch and that some serious results will finally be obtained. That, in turn, means that somebody – probably the French – will have the unpleasant task of telling the Ukrainians that the party is over and that they now need to get their act together and start implementing the Minsk Agreements, something which Zelenskii might or might not try to do, but which the real gun-toting Ukronazis will never accept. Thus, if the West is really serious about forcing Kiev to abide by the Minsk Agreements, then the West has to finally give-up its self-defeating russophobic hysteria and substantially change their tone about the

Ukraine. To invite Putin to Paris just to tell him again that Russia (which is not even a party to the Minsk Agreements) “must do more” makes zero sense. Therefore, all the other parties will have to come to terms with reality before inviting Putin. Apparently, this might be happening in Paris. As for Trump, [he just offered to mediate](#) (if asked to do so) between Russia and the Ukraine.

It shall be extremely interesting to see if this Normandy Format meeting does actually take place and what role, if any, Trump and the USA will play behind the scenes. We shall then know if Macron’s epiphany was just a one-time fluke or not.

The Saker

PS: the latest rumor from the Ukraine: Zelenskii supporters are saying that [Poroshenko is preparing a coup against Zelenskii](#) and that he is preparing a special force of Ukronazi death squads to execute that coup. Dunno about a real coup, but [they have already blocked the Rada](#). Never a dull moment indeed... :-)

Crises – the Middle-East and a few hopefully useful pointers

September 18, 2019

The Middle-East is literally exploding; the Houthis have delivered an extremely effective blow against Saudi oil production which (so they claim) has now dropped by 50% before bouncing back; there are persistent rumors that Russian Su-35s and S-400s have threatened to shoot down Israeli aircraft attacking Syria; Lebanon has declared that it will defend itself against Israeli attacks; Hezbollah has been threatening to deliver crippling strikes on Israel and even Israeli officials; Turkey has purchased Russian air defenses and says that if the USA refuses to deliver their F-35S, then Turkey will consider Su-35s and even maybe Su-57's. Bibi Netanyahu tried to use Putin for his reelection campaign (well, he really is trying desperately to stay out of jail) but had to go home empty handed and, according to the JP, his mission was a failure.

Finally, and just to make sure that the crises are only limited to the Middle-East: the Polaks and the EU Court have successfully sued to try to force Russia to use the Ukie gas transit; the USA is invoking ancient treaties to threaten Venezuela; the UK is going to hell in a handbasket; Europe (well, Germany) can't even get the Polaks to heel about North Stream 2 (well, they *are* heeling, of course, but to Uncle Shmuel, not Angela Merkel); India and Pakistan are threatening one another over Kashmir. Did I forget anything?

Oh yes, the DPRK is firing new missiles; the US wants to blame Iran for the Houthi attacks; China categorically rejects such accusations, while Russia continues to announce new revolutionary weapons built on new principles and plans to deploy the S-500 "Prometheus", just to make sure the Empire does not get any stupid ideas about trying to strike Russia (or her allies which will begin purchasing the S-500 in 2021, according official sources).

I am sure I have forgotten plenty. Really, the Empire is collapsing on all fronts and that, in turn, means the chances that the ignorant dimwits in the White House will do something very stupid dramatically increase.

Yes, I know, Bolton was fired. And I applaud that, but considering that I believe that Pompeo is even more delusional and evil than Bolton (not to mention fantastically arrogant!), that is hardly a reason to hope (I just read that Robert C.

O'Brien will succeed Bolton; he used to be the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs at the State Department; I wonder if that means even more [kidnappings of Russian nationals](#) worldwide...?).

There is so much to cover here that I will limit myself to a few points about the Middle-East which I think are important.

First, **the partial destruction of the most important Saudi oil facilities is a HUGE embarrassment for the US**. Remember that the KSA is really the “center” of CENTCOM and even the reason for its existence (to “protect” Iran from the USSR and officially keep the Shah safe; but in reality this was also part of a major deal between the USA the KSA: “*you accept payment only in dollars and we will protect you against everybody*”). Sure, there is a long list of western stooges to which a similar promise was made, including Saddam Hussein, Muammar Gaddafi, Manuel Noriega, Hosni Mubarak and many others; most are now dead, the rest in jail (iirc). Now its the turn of the Saudis it seems: not only could the super-duper “better than the S-300” patriots not stop the Houthis, all of the combined might of CENTCOM failed too.

Second, I can only concur with [‘b’ at Moon of Alabama](#) – **the war is over for the KSA**. Whether they realize it or not makes no difference. Okay, it will make a difference in time, but in time only. The Saudis and their AngloZionist patrons have three solutions:

1. Continue pretty much like before: that is the definition of insanity if different results are expected.
2. Escalate and strike Iran, following which the entire Middle-East will explode with dramatic consequences.
3. Do what the US always does: declare victory and leave.

Obviously, the third option is the only sensible one, but who said that Bibi, Trump or MbS are sensible at all? Tulsi Gabbard joined me in calling Trump somebody’s bitch, except I call him an Israeli bitch whereas Gabbard calls him a [Saudi bitch](#). Same difference!

There is, however, one restraining factor. If Trump ever strikes Iran he will become the “disposable President” for the Neocons. Iran will then use the opportunity to strike Israel and Trump will be impeached for it (the Neocons are, after all, in total control of the DNC and many key committees in Congress).

So this will all boil down to Trump and whether he has the info and brains to realize that an attack on Iran will wreck his Presidency (which is already FUBARed enough and attacking Iran will make it official) and he will be both impeached and, obviously, never reelected.

Third, **could the Houthis have done it themselves? Absolutely yes.** Iran did not have to strike directly, precisely because the Houthis were capable of doing it themselves. Check out this official exhibit of Houthi ballistic missiles and drones and see for yourself [here](#) and [here](#). Furthermore, the Houthis are becoming very similar to Hezbollah and they have clearly learned advanced missile and drone capabilities (from Iran, which is why the Israelis and the US are so angry). Now I am not, repeat, NOT saying that Iran did not help or that this strike would have been as successful had Iran not provided intelligence, targeting, technical expertise, etc. But if there is any evidence of direct Iranian involvement, let this “malevolent manatee” (which is how Fred Reed referred to Pompeo) show it to the world, and it better be better than the crap they showed for Skripal or the chemical false flags in Syria.

Fourth, what this means for the KSA and their AngloZionist patrons is that **the Houthis can strike anywhere inside the KSA with total impunity.** And not only in the KSA. Furthermore, I suspect that **Iran can also hit every single oil or gas related facility in the Middle-East just like it can strike every US/CENTCOM/NATO/Israeli objective it wants.** Furthermore, in case of total war in the Middle-East, you can expect missiles raining down on US facilities not only from Yemen (Houthis) and Lebanon (Hezbollah) but also potentially from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Fifth, **it really does not matter where or what the US and/or Saudis and/or Israelis fire at Iran, the response will be the same,** at least [according to Professor Marandi](#): it will be massive and the oil and gas export capability of the entire Middle-East will be threatened. There is no safe, cheap or effective way to strike Iran. But do the folks in DC realize that?

Next, I want to offer a few points about the alleged interception of Israeli F-35 by Russian Su-35S over Syria.

First, **we really don't have the facts,** so let's wait a little. Most stories about this come from one Arabic online paper. Now, in the last 24 hours there was “sort of kinda” confirmation from Russia, but not from officials, and these reports were not so

much giving factual details as gloating that Netanyahu walked away from Russia with nothing.

Second, my best guess is that **this story is probably based on reality**. The Israelis have been behaving as if they did not care about the Russian presence in Syria: so they engage in airstrikes exclusively for PR purposes (remember, Bibi wants to avoid jail!) and the Russians probably complained and were ignored, and now they've had enough.

Third, the fact that [the Jerusalem Post had to publish a horrified article](#) about this event conclusively proves that **those who were trying to convince us that Russia and Israel were working hand in hand and that Putin was Bibi's best friend were, well, full of crapola** and their clickbait was just that: clickbait.

Fourth, there are those technology buffs who will always try to prove that the Su-35S is vastly superior to the F-35 and that this story is very credible and those who will explain that the F-35 is vastly superior to the Su-35S and that this story is pure invention. The truth is that **it is useless and meaningless to compare two advanced aircraft "in the abstract"** or declare that one is so much better than the other. Okay, yes, the Su-35S is superior in many aspects to the F-35, but most definitely not in all possible scenarios. In fact, we would also need to know what other aircraft were in the air at the time – including AWACs, SEAD and EW – and we would need to find out exactly what role the Russian S-400s played (if any). Generally, I urge you not to engage in a) "bean-counting" (only looking at quantities) or in b) making direct combat aircraft comparisons. In the latter case, we would need to know what kind (and how much) of training the pilots got, what kind of weapons they had, what kind of sensors they used and how, and more generally, exactly how the Israelis decided to structure their attack and how the Russians decided to respond. Finally, we would have to get some detail on sensor fusing, network-centric operations, datalinks, etc. Since we know nothing about any of that, I recommend that we don't dwell on aircraft/radar/missile X vs aircraft/radar/missile Y. It's just not worth it.

Fifth, there are already rumors about this being **a false flag operation of the Israelis, the British, the KSA or the US**. Well, I sure can't prove a negative, but I see **no compelling reason to make such conclusions**. First, this is really bad news for the Empire and, second, the Houthis have done similar actions many times in the past and there is no reason to suspect that they could not have done what they did. Still, it is also undeniable that any hike in oil prices benefits a lot of people (USA shale, Russia,

the KSA, etc.). Finally, there is always, and by definition, the risk of the Israelis and their Neocon allies pulling off some kind of false flag to finally trigger a US attack on Iran. All these are, however, only indirect arguments, at least so far. The fact that a false flag is possible does not mean it actually happened, let's never forget that and never drop to premature or unfounded conclusions.

Sixth, let's look at the targets themselves. We are talking about oil facilities, huge ones, which under the logic of US/NATO/Israel (aka the "Axis of Kindness") is most definitely classified as "regime support infrastructure" or something similar. Furthermore, even under non Axis of Kindness logic, **the laws of war allow strikes on infrastructures critical to the enemy's military effort**. So while TV stations, embassies or medical factories are NOT legal targets, critical oil facilities are. The ONLY stipulation is that the attacking side make an honest effort in selecting targets and munitions and try to avoid avoidable casualties. As far as I know, the Saudis have mentioned zero victims. Yes, that is unlikely, but that is how things stand for the time being. In this case, the *Houthi strike was absolutely legitimate*, especially considering the kind of genocidal devastation the Axis of Kindness and the KSA have unleashed against Yemen.

Lastly, I will venture a guess as to why the US and Saudi air defense were so useless: they probably never expected an attack from Yemen, at least not such a sophisticated one. Most of the US/KSA air defenses are deployed to defend against an attack from Iran, from the northern direction. **The fact that this strike was so successful strongly suggests that it came from the south, from Yemen.**

Conclusion: (Sept 18th, 1816Z)

I was about to conclude that [according to RT](#), the Saudi Oil Minister has declared that the KSA "don't know yet who is responsible" and that this was good news. Then I saw this: "*Saudi Arabia accuses Iran of sponsoring oil-plant attack, says it 'couldn't have originated in Yemen'*", [also on RT](#). Not good. Not credible either.

For one thing, had it been Iran, the strike would have been far more massive and would have only been a part of a much bigger, full-scale, attack not only on Saudi oil facilities, but also on all crucial CENTCOM installations and forces. There is no way the Iranians would have opened major hostilities (and these strikes were definitely described by the Saudis as "major") just to wait for a massive US/KSA/Israeli retaliation. The Iranians are most certainly not going to repeat Saddam Hussein's

crucial mistake and allow the US/CENTCOM/NATO/Israel/KSA the time needed to prepare for a massive attack on Iran. I am monitoring various “indicators and warnings” which would suggest that the USA is up to no good, and so far I have noticed **only one potentially worrying event**: MSC Sealift and US transportation Command has ordered a no-notice turbo activation of between 23 to 25 ships from the 46 ship Ready Reserve Force (RRF have to be 5-day ready). This is an unprecedented number since 2003 and it could mean somebody just taking precautions or someone is getting twitchy. But the timing is usually September, but not in this number (more about this [here](#)). But please keep in mind that such indicators cannot be considered in isolation from other facts. **Should there be more, I will do my best to report them on the blog.**

The fact that US/KSA air defenses performed so miserably does not mean that the USA is totally clueless about ‘whodunit’. There are a lot of other sensors and systems (including in space) which will detect a missile launch (especially a ballistic missile!) and there are some radar modes which allow for long-range detection but not necessarily capable of track-while-scan or of long-range engagements. Furthermore, you can also monitor data signals and general telemetry, and since the US has immense databases with the “signature” signals from all sorts of enemy hardware, they also probably could accurately assess which type of systems were used. Just in this case, just as in the case of MH-17, the Pentagon knows exactly ‘whodunit’. Ditto for the Russians who have a lot of SIGINT/FISINT in the Middle-East (and in space).

But in the last days of the Empire, facts don’t really matter. What matters is whatever is seen as politically expedient by the folks in the White House and in Israel. My biggest hope is that Trump finds out the truth about the strikes and that he has enough brains left to understand that should he strike Iran he will lose the election and will probably even be impeached to boot.

Let’s hope that his narcissistic instincts will save our long-suffering planet!

The Saker

Iran prevails over the USA, twice, but this is far from over

September 26, 2019

An Iranian official has [announced](#) that the UK-flagged tanker Stena Impero was free to leave. Remember the Stena Impero? This is the tanker the IRGC arrested after the Empire committed an act of piracy on the high seas and seized the Iranian tanker Grace 1. Col Cassad posted a [good summary](#) of this info-battle, blow by blow (corrected machine translation):

1. Britain, at the instigation of the US, seizes the Iranian tanker Grace 1 and demands from Iran guarantees that it in any case does not go to Syria.
2. Iran, in response, captures the British tanker Stena Impero and says it will not retreat until the British releases Grace 1. British ships that guarded merchant ships in the Strait of Hormuz were warned that they would be destroyed if they interfered with the IRGC's actions.
3. After 2 months, Britain officially releases Grace 1, which is renamed Adrian Darya 1. It raised the Iranian flag and changed the crew.
4. The British government says the tanker is released under Iran's obligations not to unload the tanker at the Syrian port of Baniyas or anywhere else in Syria. Iran denies this.
5. The US officially requires Britain and Gibraltar to arrest Adrian Darya 1 and not let him into Syria, as it violates the sanctions regime. Britain and Gibraltar refuse the US.
6. Adrian Darya 1 reaches the coast of Syria and after a few days on the beam of Baniyas, unloads its cargo in Syria. The Iranian government says it has not made any commitments to anyone.
7. After Adrian Darya 1 left Syria, Iran announced that it was ready to release the British tanker. The goal has been achieved.

This is truly an amazing series of steps, really!

The USA is the undisputed maritime hyper-power, not only because of its huge fleet, but because of its network of bases all over the planet (700-1000 depending on how you count) and, possibly even more importantly, a network of so-called "allies", "friends", "partners" and "willing coalition members" (aka de facto US colonies) worldwide. In comparison, Iran is a tiny dwarf, at least in maritime terms. But, as the

US expression goes, “it’s not the size of the dog in the fight, it’s the size of the fight in the dog” which decides the outcome.

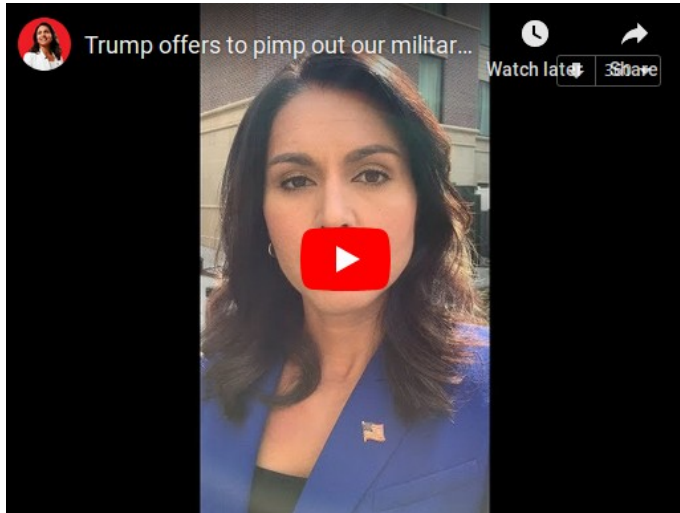
And then there is the (provisional) outcome of the Houthi strike on the Saudi oil installations. The Saudis appeared to be pushing for war against Iran, as did Pompeo, but Trump apparently decided otherwise:



[https://youtu.be/ Yg_V141LYM](https://youtu.be/Yg_V141LYM)

Some have focused on the fact that Trump said that it was “easy” to attack Iran. Others have ridiculed Trump for his silly bragging about how US military gear would operate in spite of the dismal failure of both US cruise missile attacks (on Syria) and the Patriot SAMs (in the KSA). But all that bragging is simply obligatory verbal flag-waving; this is what the current political culture in the USA demands from all politicians. But I think that the key part of his comments is when he says that to simply attack would be “easy” (at least for him it would) but that this would not show strength. I also notice that Trump referred to those who predicted that he would start a war and said that they were wrong about him. Trump also acknowledged that a lot of people are happy that he does *not* strike (while others deplored that, of course, beginning with the entire US pseudo-liberal & pseudo-Left media and politicians). The one exception has been, again, Tulsi Gabbard who posted this after Trump declared that the US was “locked and loaded”:

https://youtu.be/9Jo8QU2s_5I



Whatever may be the case, this time again, Trump seemed to have taken a last minute decision to scrap the attack the Neocons

have been dreaming about for decades.

I think that I made my opinion about Trump pretty clear, yet I also have to repeat that all these “climbdowns” by Trump are, just by themselves, a good enough reason to justify a vote for Trump. Simply put; since Trump came to power we saw a lot of hubris, nonsense, ignorance and stupidity. But we did NOT see a war, especially not a major one. I will never be able to prove that, but I strongly believe that if Hillary had won, the Middle-East would have already exploded (most likely after a US attempt at imposing a no-fly zone over Syria).

We are also very lucky that, at least in this case, the rapid every four year Presidential election in the USA contributes to keep Trump (and his Neocon masters) in check: Trump probably figured out that a blockade of Venezuela or, even more so, a strike on Iran would severely compromise his chances of being re-elected, especially since neither theater offers the US any exit strategy.

Still, following these immensely embarrassing defeats, Trump and his advisors had to come up with something “manly” (which they confuse with “macho”) and make some loud statements about sending more forces to the Persian Gulf and beefing up the Saudi air defenses. This will change nothing. Iran is already the most over-sanctioned country on the planet and we have seen what US air defense can, and cannot do. Truth be told, this is all about face-saving and I don’t mind any face-saving inanities as long as they make it possible to avoid a real shooting war.

Still, the closer we get to the next US election, the more Trump should not only carefully filter what he says, he would be well advised to give some clear and strict instructions to his entire Administration about what they can say and what they cannot say. Of course, in the case of a rabid megalomaniac like Pompeo, no such “talking points” will be enough: Trump needs to fire this psychopath ASAP and appoint a *real* diplomat as Secretary of State. After all, Pompeo belongs in the same padded room as Bolton.

Now if we look at the situation from the Iranian point of view, it is most interesting. First, for context, I recommend the recent articles posted by Iranian analysts on the blog, especially the following ones:

1. [“War Gaming the Persian Gulf Conflict”](#) by **Black Archer Williams**
2. [“Karbala, The Path of Most Resistance”](#) by **Mansoureh Tadjik**
3. [“Resistance report: Syrian Army takes the initiative in Idlib while Washington blames its failures on Iran again”](#) by **Aram Mirzaei**

I also recommend [my recent interview](#) with **Professor Marandi**.

I recommend all these Iranian voices because they are so totally absent from the political discussions on the Middle-East, at least in western media. Williams, Tadjik, Mirzaei and Marandi are very different people, they also have different points of view and focuses of interest, but when you read them you realize how confident and determined Iranians are. I am in contact with Iranians abroad and in Iran and all of them, without exception, share that calm determination. It seems that, just like Russians, Iranians most certainly don’t want war, but they are ready for it.

The Iranian preferred strategy is also clear: just the way Hezbollah keeps Israel in check so will the Houthis with the KSA. The Houthis, who are now in a very strong negotiation position, have offered to [stop striking the KSA if the Saudis do likewise](#). Now, the Saudis, just like the Israelis, are too weak to accept any such offer. That is paradoxical but true: if the Saudis officially took the deal, that would “seal” their defeat in the eyes of their own public opinion. Having said that, I can’t believe that the Saudis believe their own propaganda about war against Iran. No matter how delusional and arrogant the Saudi leaders are, surely they must realize what a war against Iran would mean for the House of Saud (although when I read [this](#) I wonder)! It is one thing to murder defenseless Shias in the KSA, Bahrain or Yemen and quite another to take on “the country which trained Hezbollah”.

Speaking of delusional behavior, the Europeans finally did fall in line behind their AngloZionist overlords and [agreed to blame Iran for the attack](#) under what I call the “Skripal rules of evidence” aka “[highly likely](#)“. The more things change, the more they remain the same I suppose...

It is pretty clear that all the members of the Axis of Kindness (USA, KSA, Israel) are in deep trouble on the internal front: Trump is busy with the “[Zelensky vs Biden](#)” scandal, especially now since the Dems are opening impeachment procedures; the latest elections failed to deliver the result Bibi wanted. As for the Saudis, after pushing for war they now have to settle for more sanctions and radars, hardly a winning combination.

The Saudis are too weak, clueless and obese (physically and mentally) to get anything done by themselves. But the USA and Israel are now in a dire need to show some kind of “victory” over, well, somebody. Anybody will do. Thus the US have just [denied visas to 10 members of the Russian delegation to the United Nations](#) (thereby violating yet another US obligation under international law, but nobody in the US cares about such minor trivialities as international law); and just to show how amazingly powerful the Empire is, the [Iranian delegation to the UN received the same “punished bad boys” treatment](#): truly, a triumph worthy of a superpower! Last minute update: the US is now [revoking Iranian student visas](#) and [denying entry to Venezuelan diplomats](#).

This “war of visas” is the US equivalent of the “war on statues” the Ukrainians, Balts and the Poles have been waging to try to distract their population from the *comprador* policies of their governments.

As for the Israelis, I now expect the Israelis to strike some empty building in Syria (or even in Gaza!).

Conclusion: facts don’t really matter anymore, and neither does logic

Ten years ago Chris Hedges wrote a book called “[Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle](#)” and, a full decade later, this title is still an extremely accurate diagnostic. What Hedges politely called the “end of literacy” can be observed in all its facets, listening to US political and military leaders. While most of them are, indeed, morally bankrupt and even psychopaths, it is their level of ignorance and incompetence which is the most amazing. First, the Russians spoke of “[non-agreement-capable](#)” “partners” but eventually Putin quipped that it was hard to

work with “[people who confuse Austria and Australia](#)“. This all, by the way, applies as much to the Obama Administration as it does to the Trump Administration: their common motto could have been “illusions über alles” or something similar. Once a political culture fully enters into the realm of illusions and delusions the end is near because no real-world problem ever gets tackled: it only gets obfuscated, denied and drowned into an ocean of triumphalist back-slapping and other forms of self-worship.

Post scriptum: the US goes crazy but Trump just might survive after all

So the Dems decided to try to impeach Trump. While I always expected the Neocons to treat Trump as the “disposable President” which they would try to use to do all the stuff they don’t want to be blamed for directly, and then toss him away once they squeezed him for everything he could give them, I am still appalled by the nerve, the arrogance and the total dishonesty of the Dems (see my rant [here](#)).

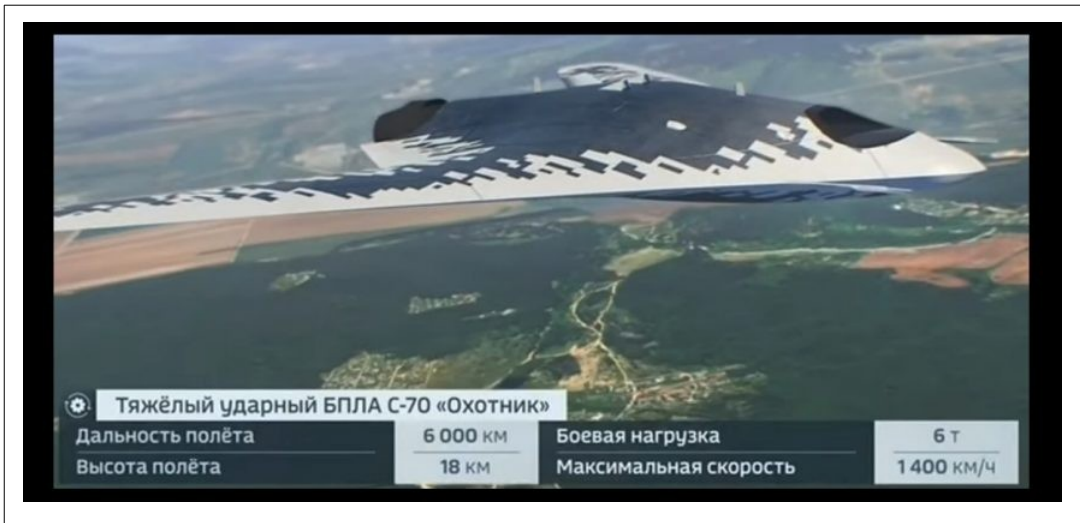
My gut feeling is that Trump just might beat this one for the very same reason he won the first time around: because the other side is even worse (except Tulsi Gabbard, of course).

Of course, an attack on Iran would be a welcome distraction *à la* “[wag the dog](#)” and Trump might be tempted. Hopefully, the Dems will self-destruct fast enough for Trump not to have to consider this.

The Saker

New weapons and the new tactics which they make possible: three examples

October 02, 2019



There are probably hundreds of books out there about the so-called “Revolution in Military Affairs”, some of them pretty good, most of them very bad, and a few very good ones (especially [this one](#)). For a rather dull and mainstream discussion, you can check the [Wikipedia article on the RMA](#). Today I don’t really want to talk about this or similar buzzwords (like “hybrid warfare” for example). Frankly, in my experience, these buzzwords serve two purposes:

1. to sell (books, articles, interviews, etc.)
2. to hide a person’s lack of understanding of tactics, operational art and strategy.

This being said, there **are** new things happening in the realm of warfare, new technologies are being developed, tested and deployed, some extremely successfully.

In his now famous speech, Putin revealed some of these new weapons systems, although he did not say much about how they would be engaged (which is quite logical, since he was making a political speech, not a military-technical report). For those would be interested in this topic, you can check [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

The recent Houthi drone and missile strike on the Saudi oil installations has shown to the world something which the Russians have known for several years: that even rather primitive drones can be a real threat. Sophisticated drones are a major threat to every military out there, though Russia has developed truly effective (including cost-effective, which is absolutely crucial, more about that later) anti-drone capabilities.

First, lets look at the very low-cost end of the spectrum: drones

Let's begin with the primitive drones. These are devices which, according to one Russian military expert, roughly need a 486 CPU, about 1MB of RAM, 1GB of harddisk space and some (now extremely cheap) sensors to capture the signals from the US GPS, the Russian GLONASS or both (called "GNSS"). In fact, the "good terrorists" in Syria, financed, assisted and trained by the "Axis of Kindness" (USA/KSA/Israel) have been attacking the Russian base in Khmeimim with swarms of such drones for years. [According to the commander of the air defenses of Khmeimin](#), **over 120(!)** drones were shot down or disabled by Russian air defenses in just the last two years. Obviously, the Russians know something that some "Axis of Kindness" does not.

The biggest problem: missile systems should not be used against drones

Some self-described "specialists" have wondered why Patriot missiles did not shoot down the Houthi drones. This is asking the wrong question because missiles are completely ineffective in engaging attacking drone swarms. And, for once, this is not about the poor performance of Patriot SAMs. Even Russian S-400s are the wrong systems to use on individual drones or drone swarms. Why? Because of the following characteristics of drones:

1. they are typically small, with a very special low profile, extremely light and made up of materials which minimally reflect radar signals;
2. they are very slow, which does not make it easier to shoot them down, but much harder, especially since most radars are designed to track and engage very fast targets (aircraft, ballistic missiles, etc.);
3. they can fly *extremely* low, which allows them to hide; even lower than cruise missiles flying [NOE](#);
4. they are extremely cheap, thus wasting multi-million dollar missiles on drones costing maybe 10-20 dollars (or even say, 30,000 dollars for the very high end) makes no sense whatsoever;

5. they can come in swarms with huge numbers; much larger than the number of missiles a battery can fire.

From the above, it is obvious how drones should be engaged: either with AA cannons or by EW systems.

[Sidebar: In theory, they could also be destroyed by lasers, but these would require a lot of power, thus engaging cheapo drones with them is possible, but not optimal]

It just so happens that the Russians have both, hence their success in Khmeimim.

One ideal anti-drone weapon would be the formidable [Pantsir](#) which combines multi-channel detection and tracking (optoelectronics, radar, IR, visual, third-party datalinks, etc.) and a powerful cannon. And, even better, the Pantsir also has powerful medium range missiles which can engage targets supporting the drone attack.

The other no less formidable anti-drone system would be the various Russian EW systems deployed in Syria.

Why are they so effective?

Let's look at the major weaknesses of drones

First, drones are either remotely controlled, or have onboard navigation systems. Obviously, just like any signal, the remote signal can be jammed and since jammers are typically closer to the intended target than the remote control station, it is easier for it to produce a much stronger signal since the strength of a signal diminishes according to the so-called "[inverse square law](#)". Thus in terms of raw emission power, even a powerful transmitter far away is likely to lose to a smaller, weaker, signal if that one is closer to the drone (i.e. near the intended target along the likely axis of attack). Oh sure, in theory one could use all sorts of fancy techniques to try to avoid that (for example frequency-hopping, etc.) but these very quickly dramatically raise the weight and cost of the drone. You also need to consider that the stronger the signal from the drone, the bigger and heavier the onboard power cells need to be, and the heavier the drone is.

Second, some drones rely on either satellite signals (GPS/GLONASS) or inertial guidance. Problem #1: satellite signals can be spoofed. Problem #2 inertial guidance is either not that accurate or, again, heavier and more costly.

Some very expensive and advanced cruise missiles use TERCOM, terrain contour matching, but that is too expensive for light and cheap drones (such advanced cruise missiles and their launchers is what the S-3/400s were designed to engage, and that at least makes sense financially). There are even more fancy and extremely expensive cruise missile guidance technologies out there, but these are simply not applicable to weapons like drones with their biggest advantage being simple technology and low costs.

The truth is that even a non-tech guy like me could build a drone ordering all the parts from online stores such as Amazon, AliBaba, Banggood and tons of others and build pretty effective drones to, say, drop a hand grenade or some other explosive on an enemy position. Somebody with an engineering background could easily build the kind of drones the “good terrorists” have used against the Russians in Syria. A country, even a poor one and devastated by a genocidal war, like Yemen, could very easily build the kind of drones used by the Houthis, especially with Iranian and Hezbollah help (the latter two have already successfully taken remote control of US and Israeli drones respectively).

Finally, I can promise you that right now, in countries like the DPRK, China, Russia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Venezuela, Cuba, etc, there are teams of engineers working on the development of very low cost drones just like there are teams of military analysts developing new tactics of engagement.

This is, I submit, the first not-so-noticed (yet) kinda-revolution in military affairs.

Second, lets look at the very high end: 5th+ generation aircraft and 5-6th generation UAVs

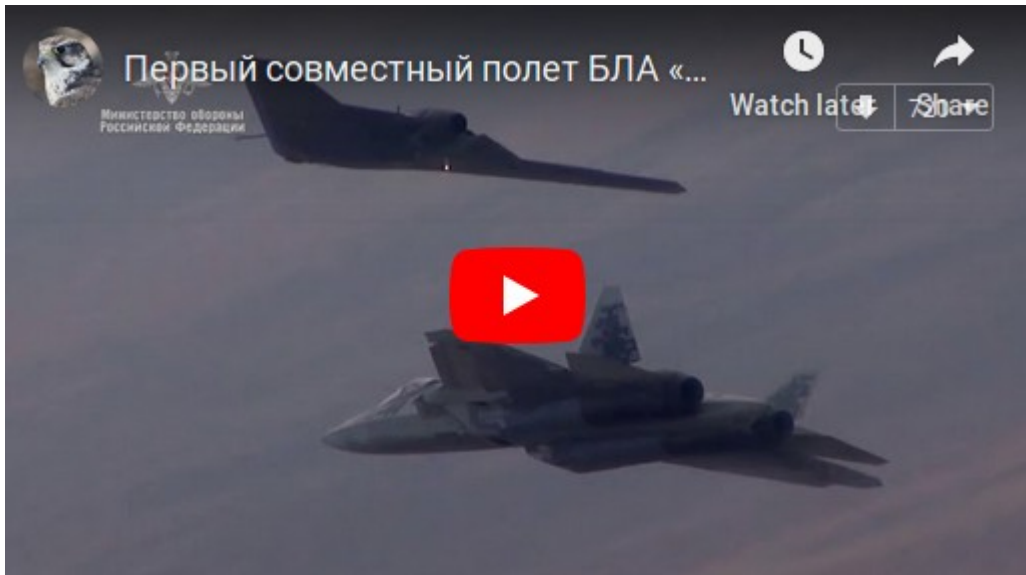
While some in India have declared (for political reasons and to please the USA) that the Su-57 was not “really” a 5th generation aircraft (on the pretext that the first ones were deployed with 4th gen engines and because the Su-57 did not have the same kind of all-aspect RCS which the F-22 has), in Russia and China the debate is now whether the Su-57 is really only a 5th generation aircraft or really a 5th+ or even 6th generation one. Why?

For one thing, rumors coming out of the Sukhoi KB and the Russian military is that the pilot in the Su-57 is really an “option”, meaning that the Su-57 was designed from the start to operate without any pilot at all. My personal belief is that the Su-57 has an extremely modular design which currently does require a human pilot and that the

first batch of S-57s will probably not fly all alone, but that the capability to remove the human pilot to be replaced by a number of advanced systems has been built-in, and that the Russians will deploy pilot-less Su-57's in the future.

[Sidebar: this 3rd, 4th, 5th and now even 6th generation business is a little too fuzzy for my taste, so I rather avoid these categories and I don't see a point in dwelling on them. What is important is what weapons systems can do, not how we define them, especially for a non-technical article like this one]

In the meantime, the Russians have for the first time shown this:



https://youtu.be/TUKLhQpO_iE

What you are seeing here is the following:

A Su-57 flies together with the new long range Russian strike drone: the **Heavy Strike UAV S-70 Hunter** and here is what the Russian MoD has recently revealed about this drone:

- Range: 6,000km (3,700 miles)
- Ceiling: 18,000m (60,000 feet)
- Max speed: 1,400km/h (1,000mph)
- Max load: 6,000kg (12,000lbs)

Furthermore, Russian experts are now saying that this UAV can fly alone, or in a swarm, or in a joint flight with a manned Su-57. I also believe that in the future, one Su-57 will probably control several such heavy strike drones.

*[Sidebar: flag-waving patriots will immediately declare that the S-70 is a copy of the B-2. In appearance that is quite true. But consider this: the max speed of the B-2 is, according to Wikipedia, 900km/h (560 mph). Compare that with the 1,400km/h (1,000mph) and realize that a flying wing design and a **supersonic** flying wing design are completely different platforms (the supersonic stresses require a completely different structural design)]*

What can a Su-57 do when flying together with the S-70?

Well, for one thing since the S-70 has a lower RCS than the Su-57 (this according to Russian sources) the Su-57 uses the S-70 as a long range hostile air defense penetrator tasked with collecting signals intelligence and relaying those back to the Su-57. But that is not all. The Su-57 can also use the S-70 to attack ground targets (including SEAD) and even execute air-to-air attacks. Here the formidable speed and huge 6 tons max load of the S-70 offer truly formidable capabilities, including the deployment of heavy Russian air-to-air, air-to-ground and air-to-ship capabilities.

[Sidebar: some Russian analysts have speculated that in order to operate with the S-70 the Su-57 has to be modified into a two-seater with a [WSO](#) operating the S-70 from the back seat. Well, nobody knows yet, this is all top secret right now, but I think that this idea clashes with the Sukhoi philosophy of maximally reducing the workload of the pilot. True, the formidable MiG-31 has a WSO, even the new MiG-31BM does, but the design philosophy at the MiG bureau is often very different from what the folks at Sukhoi develop and, besides, 4 decades stand between the MiG-31 and the Su-57. My personal guess is that the operations of the S-70 will be mostly fully automated and even distributed along the network connecting all integrated air and ground based air defense systems. If an engineer reads these lines, I would appreciate any comments or corrections! After all, this is just my best guess]

The usual gang of trolls will probably object that the Russian computer/chip industry is so far behind the supposedly much superior western solid-state electronics that this is all nonsense; there was a human sitting inside the S-70; this thing don't fly; the Su-57 is a 4th gen aircraft much inferior to the amazingly superb F-22/F-35; and

all the rest of it. Especially for them, I want to remind everybody that Russia was the first country to deploy airborne phased array radars on her MiG-31s which, to boot, were capable of exchanging targeting data by encrypted datalinks with FOUR (!) other aircraft maintaining EM silence (while using their optoelectronics and relaying that data back). Furthermore, these MiG-31s could also exchange data with airborne (AWACS) and ground-based (SAMs) radars. And that was in the early 1980s, almost 40 years ago!

The truth is that the Soviet armed forces deployed plenty of network-centric systems long before the West, especially in the Soviet Air Force and Navy (while the Soviet Ground-Forces pioneered the use of so-called RSC “[reconnaissance-strike complexes](#)” which were the nightmare of NATO during the Cold War). Nowadays, all we need to do is parse the NATO whining about Russian Anti Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) capabilities to see that the Russians are still pioneering advanced military-technical capabilities which the West can only dream of.

Now let’s revisit some of the recent criticisms of the Su-57

So what about the fact that the Su-57 does not have all-around very low [RCS](#)? *What if* the Su-57 was never intended to spearhead the penetration of advanced and integrated air defense systems? *What if* from day 1 the Sukhoi designers were warned by their colleagues at [Almaz-Antey](#), [Novator](#), [KRET](#) or even the good folks at the [OSNAZ \(SIGINT\) and the 6th Directorate of the GRU](#) that “stealth” is vastly over-rated? *What if* it was clear to the Russians from day 1 that a low frontal-RCS did not compromise other capabilities as much as a quasi-total reliance on all-aspect low-RCS never to be detected in the first place?

The crucial thing to keep in mind is that **new technological capabilities also generate new tactics**. By the way, western analysts understand that, hence the new network-centric capabilities of the F-35. This is especially true since the F-35 will be a pathetic dogfighter whereas the Su-57 might well be the most capable one out there: did you know that the Su-57 has several radars besides the main one, that they cover different bands and that they give the Su-57 a 360 degree vision of the battlefield, even without using the signals from the S-70, AWACS or ground based SAM radars?. And in terms of maneuverability, I will just show this and rest my case:



<https://youtu.be/pLXFky2LLvM>

Lastly, the case of the invisible missile container :-)

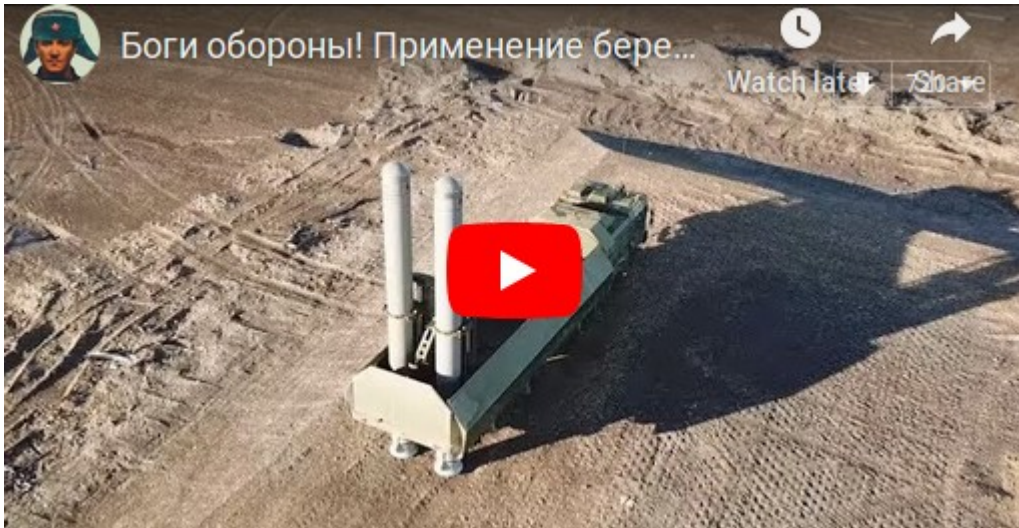
Remember the [Kalibr cruise-missile](#) recently seen in the war in Syria. Did you know that it can be shot from a typical commercial container, like the ones you will find on trucks, trains or ships? Check out this excellent video which explains this:



https://youtu.be/mbUU_9bOcnM

Just remember that the Kalibr has a range of anywhere between 50km to 4,000km and that it can carry a nuclear warhead. How hard would it be for Russia to deploy these cruise missiles right off the US coast in regular container ships? Or just keep a few containers in Cuba or Venezuela? This is a system which is so undetectable that the Russians could deploy it off the coast of Australia to hit the NSA station in Alice Springs if they wanted, and nobody would even see it coming. In fact, the Russians could deploy such a system on any civilian merchant ship, sailing under any imaginable flag, and station it, not only anywhere off the US coastline, but even in a US port since most containers are never examined anyways (and when they are, it is typically for drugs or contraband). Once we realize this, all the stupid scaremongering about Russian subs off the coast of Florida become plain silly, don't they?

Now let's look at some very interesting recent footage from the recent maneuvers in Russia:



<https://youtu.be/IW9j56gOOoY>

Here is what the person who posted that video (Max Fisher, [here](#) is his YT channel) wrote about this coastal defense system, explaining it very well:

For the first time, during the tactical exercises of the tactical group of the Northern Fleet, carrying out combat duty on the island of Kotelny, the coastal missile system “Bastion” was used. The BRK was successful in firing a supersonic Onyx anti-ship cruise missile at a sea target located over 60 kilometers away in the Laptev Sea, which confirmed its readiness to effectively carry out combat duty in the Arctic and perform tasks to protect the island zone and the Russian coast. Onyx is a universal anti-ship cruise missile. It is designed to combat surface naval groups and single ships in the face of strong fire and electronic countermeasures. On the basis of the rocket, there are two seemingly absolutely identical alternative export options: the Russian Yakhont and the Indian BrahMos, but with significantly reduced combat characteristics. These vehicles are capable of starting from under water: they have a flight speed of 750 meters per second and carry the crushing high-explosive warhead with a weight of half a ton. The range of their flight is more than 600 kilometers. Previously, Rubezh BRK was used as the main coastal missile system of the tactical group of the Northern Fleet. At the end of August, they successfully hit two targets - “Termit” missiles installed in the Laptev Sea at a distance of more than 50 kilometers from the coast.

Now let me ask you this: how hard would you think it would be for Russia to develop a container size version coastal defense system using the technologies used in the Bastion/Yakhont/BrahMos missile systems? Since the AngloZionists have now reneged on The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, the Russians have *already* developed a land-based version of their Kalibr missile which is ready to deploy as soon as the US deploys any such missile in Europe.

The fact is that Russia has perfected an entire family of ballistic and cruise missiles which can be completely hidden from detection and which can be deployed literally anywhere on the planet. Even with nuclear warheads.

This capability completely changes all the previous US deterrence/containment strategies (which are still halfway stuck in the Cold War and halfway stuck with low-intensity/counter-insurgency operations like what they have been doing (with no success whatsoever!) in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya and in Latin America and Africa).

In the light of the above, what do you make of the steady flow of NATO ships deployed in the Black Sea to “deter” Russia? If you find it completely suicidal, I agree. In fact, all these ships are doing is allowing the Russians to train their crews on the “real thing”. But should it ever come to a shooting war, the life span of any and every NATO ship in the Black Sea would be measured in minutes. Literally!

Now lets think of Iran. As I said many, many times, Russia will not enter a full-scale war against the combined powers of the “Axis of Kindness” on behalf of Iran (or any other country on the planet). But Russia very much might get seriously fed up with the “Axis of Kindness” and sell Iran any missile the Iranians would be willing to acquire. In the past I have often written that the real sign that Iran is about to be attacked would not be the presence of USN ships in the Strait of Hormuz or along the Iranian coast, but the opposite: a flushing out of all ships from the Strait itself and a careful repositioning of the bulk of the USN ships inside sea and land based US air defenses “umbrella” available at that moment. I can only imagine the nightmare for CENTCOM if Iran begins to acquire even a small number of Bastions or Kalibers or Yakhont or BrahMos missiles :-)

Conclusion: the “Axis of Kindness” countries are in big, big trouble!

The US and Israel have tremendous technological capabilities, and in normal times US specialists could gradually deploy systems capable of countering the kind of

capabilities (not only necessarily Russian ones) we now see deployed in various areas of operations. And there sure is enough money, considering that the US alone spends more on the “promotion of kindness” than the rest of the planet combined! So what is the problem?

Simple, the US Congress, which might well be the most corrupt parliament on the planet, is in the business of:

1. Hysterical flag-waving and declaring any naysayers “un-American”
2. Making billions for the US ruling *nomenklatura*

Thus, to admit that the “shining city on the hill” and its “best armed forces in history” are rapidly falling behind foes which the US propaganda has described as “primitive” and “inferior” for decades is quite literally ***unthinkable*** for US politicians. After all, the US public might wonder why all these multi-billion dollar toys the US MIC has been producing in the last decades have not yielded a single success, never-mind a meaningful victory! Trump, in his campaign, tried to make that point. He was instantly attacked by the Dems for not supporting the “best military in history” and he quickly changed his tune. Now even the weapons the US does not even have yet are better than those already being tested and, possibly, deployed by Russia.

This “feel good” approach to military issues is very nice, warm and fuzzy. But it sure does not make it possible to even identify present, or even less so, future dangers.

Then, of course, there is the issue of money. The US, in its short history, has deployed some absolutely world class weapons systems technologies. My personal favorites: the Willys MBm, also known as a Jeep, and the superb F-16. But there are many, many more. The problem with these, at least from the point of view of the US *nomenklatura*, is that they were designed for warfare, for the many and very different real-world battlefields out there. They were never designed to enrich the already fantastically rich!

Hence the country which produced the Jeep now mostly produces massive hulks of metal which drive like crap, which constantly break, but which give the narcissistic and baseball *cum* sunglasses hat wearing left-lane male drivers a delightful feeling of macho superiority. And, of course, the country which created and deployed the formidable, yet economic, F-16 in the thousands (well over 4000 I think) now

produces the F-35 (good thing that the US colonies like Poland or Japan are willing to buy them to please their beloved Uncle Shmuel).

From the point of view of the US *nomenklatura*, the F-35 is a stunning, amazing, success, not a high-tech flying brick! The costs of this system are not the proof of the incompetence of US engineers, or the cluelessness of US military analysts. Rather, these costs are proof of the combined effects of infinite greed and self-worship of the US ruling class.

Sadly, one of the best ways to learn the important lessons, is by means of a painful or catastrophic defeat. The Russia of today would not have been possible without the horrors of the “democratic rule” of Eltsin in the 1990s. Think of it: during the first Chechen war, the Russians had a hard time even finding one complete combat capable regiment and they had to use “combined battalions” (сводный батальон) instead. This will probably also happen to the USA.

The Saker

Russia's kidnapping problem

October 09, 2019

No, this will not be an article about Russians kidnapped in Chechnia (that was a very long time ago) or somewhere in a combat zone. I will be talking about the USA and Iran. First, here are a few links for context:

- About the FBI's illegal detention of parliament member Inga Iumasheva "[Imagine FSB interrogating a US senator? FBI agent questions Russian lawmaker, offers 'informal' meeting](#)"
- About the IRGC's rather weird arrest of Russian journalist Iulia Iuzik "[Iran Arrests Russian Journalist Yulia Yuzik for Espionage](#)"
- A recent article by Paul Craig Roberts "[Will the Russians Ever Learn?](#)"
- My own analysis for the Unz Review "[Kidnapping as a Tool of Imperial Statecraft?](#)"

Quick update: the Iranians have declared that the detention of Iuzik was not an espionage case, but a visa violation which will be resolved very soon.

Next, I would like to clarify a few things before discussing what I think is "*Russia's kidnapping problem*".

In the case of Iuzik, I do not think that she was a spy for anybody, including the Israelis. Why? For one thing, I read that she entered Iran with a passport stamped with an Israeli visa. That is not very smart, especially for a putative 'spy' and, besides, even the Israelis are not that arrogant (or incompetent). Furthermore, if the Iranians (who have truly world class security services!) had really suspected Iuzik, they had many other options including:

1. Setting up a sting operation and film her doing something illegal
2. Feed Iuzik all sorts of bad info to confuse her bosses and smoke out any spies in Iran
3. Contact the FSB and warn the Russians about her real professional profile

These are just the three most obvious ones. There are many more.

Finally, spies are not arrested immediately upon arrival - this really makes no sense whatsoever (what would be the point?).

*[Sidebar: some have noted that Iuzik is closely linked to all sorts of toxic Russian “informal” or “non-system” opposition groups. That is absolutely true and I am sure that Iuzik has no more love for Putin than she has for Iran. And maybe she truly loves Israel. But that does *not* make her a usable spy while this could have made her a “victim of Putin’s regime and hatred for real journalists“; at least if the Russian Foreign Ministry had not acted immediately and firmly. The truth is that these Kodorkovskii-type of “journalists” are no threat to Putin or his “regime”. That is precisely what makes them so angry and why they have to invent “persecutions” ex nihilo]*

So what happened here?

My guess is (and I hope and ask my Iranian friends to correct me if I am wrong!) that this is not about Iuzik herself. I see two possibilities:

1. The Israeli visa really infuriated somebody at the IRGC and that person acted impulsively
2. This is the result of internal infighting in Iran

The first one is obvious, so let me explain the second one.

A lot of Iranians harbor plenty of reservations about Russia. Some are even outright hostile or suspicious. They are not alone, there are also plenty of Russians who do not trust the Iranians. In the first case, the history of wars and Russian interventions (not to mention the Soviet support for Saddam Hussein’s war on Iran!) is the cause. In the Russian case, the Iranian attitude towards Afghanistan, Chechnia and, especially, Bosnia created a bad image of Iran (and, to a lesser degree, Islam) in some circles in Russia. There is nothing new here, other countries have had the same problem (France and Germany, Russia and China, etc.). My guess is that somebody somewhere in the Iranian power structure saw this as a way to create problems between Russia and Iran. The telltale sign for me is that Iuzina was arrested, according to various reports, by an IRGC special forces team (that is what is done with real spies to prevent them from killing themselves or destroying evidence). Thus a REAL anti-spy method was used on somebody who was self-evidently NOT a spy. If so, that plan failed, since the Russians immediately summoned the Iranian ambassador who immediately promised to solve this issue.

The case of Iumasheva is much more primitive. This is simply the latest attempt of the US deep state to try to make the Russians do something in retaliation which could

then be used to prove how evil and devious the Russians are. As for offering her to grab a coffee on the way out, it is simply a lack of education of the FBI agents involved. Maybe they wanted to hit on her, or brag to their pals about taking her out, or maybe they simply wanted to show some kindness and did not realize how this kind of clumsy “kindness” would be seen in Russia (where women have a very different status than the poor women of the United States).

So these two cases are completely unrelated and do not form a pattern.

Except they do, alas, and this is the real Russian kidnapping problem.

In the public opinion (both in Russia and outside Russia) Russia simply looks weak and easy to bully. Now, of course, inside Russia these kinds of views are mostly held by pro-US “liberals” who are just waiting to fan any flame against Putin and the Kremlin. Most people inside Russia do actually understand the reasons why Russia does not retaliate in kind (Maria Zakharova just repeated it all on TV recently, Russian speakers can listen to her [here](#)). She summed it all



Where whining will get you in Russia

up by mentioning the Russian proverb “*На обиженных воду возят*” whose direct translation into English makes no sense whatsoever: water is carried on the backs of offended people. This proverb comes from the times of Peter I when canalizations were not available everywhere and when some dishonest employees of the state who were supposed to deliver the water by carriage for free began charging money for this. When Czar Peter heard about that, he punished these crooks by making them pull the horse-carriages themselves. Nowadays the word “offended” takes a different meaning of “pouting” or “whining”, so I would (very freely) translate it as “whiners get screwed” or something to that effect. An even freer translation could be “don’t bitch and you won’t be treated like one”. Simply put, concepts like “*oi vey!*” or “*gwalt*” are not Russian ones :-)

When westerners are outraged, they typically do a lot of talking. They threaten, they complain, they protest, they denounce, etc. Russians typically say nothing, take the pain and concentrate. Furthermore, complaints, threats or protests are seen as

signs of weakness in the Russian culture. For example, the advice given to anybody going to jail in Russia is “не верь, не бойся, не проси” which means “don’t trust, don’t fear and don’t ask/beg”. If the so-called “Russian studies specialists” and other experts in the West understood this key feature of the Russian mindset they would not misread Russia so often.

So this is what happens: each time somebody in the West kidnaps a Russian citizen (or does not respect their diplomatic status) the Russian officials very boringly and vapidly protest, mostly behind closed doors and publicly repeat the canned sentences about “US obligations under international law”, about how the boorish behavior of the USA will end up boomeranging and even further discredit the country which modestly fancies itself the “city on the hill”, “indispensable nation”, the “land of the free”, “home of the brave”, etc.

This all simply reeks of weakness to non-Russians (just see Paul Craig Robert’s article above!).

And that is a REAL problem for Russia.

In Asia, everybody “gets it”. The Iranians understand that absolutely perfectly and do not mistake politely smiling diplomats with Russian weakness (Iran’s future is, in so many ways, becoming dependent on Russia and the Iranians know that very well; just as with the Putin-Xi alliance, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Putin also understand each other perfectly). Hence their immediate reaction. As for the Russians, they also understand that this was not a hostile act on the part of Iran as a country but either a bureaucratic screw-up, or a case of Iranian infighting (which happens in Russia too!).

But in the West, Russia’s apparent passivity and even a taste for pain only triggers bewilderment and frustration and I believe that Russia needs to address this problem for the following reason:

Thanks to the ceaseless efforts of Obama and Trump, the AngloZionist Empire is tanking much faster than anybody (including myself) would have ever thought. True, Europe is still a US colony, but the “natives are being restless” and there are all the signs that at least the “Old Europe” (aka “western Europe”) is slowly coming to its senses and realizes that the US not only fails to deliver much, but even cannot really punish very much either. Not only that, but the “Old Europeans” will vitally need Russia’s help to deal with the “New Europeans” (aka “eastern Europeans”), wannabe

colonial servants and full-time Empire-brown-nosing regimes when the EU finally tanks (which, at least to me, is not an issue of “whether” but only a question of “when”).

So far, and as long as Russia continues to look like a willing punching ball of the USA, future potential allies will always wonder whether Russia is a paper tiger or, even worse, a “pretend-resister” and a pushover in reality.

Europe and the Americas are no more a Russian foreign policy priority, if only because right now the US is “not agreement capable” while the EU is trying to find some middle-path between the US, Russia and the nutjobs in the East. True, Russian foreign policy priorities are now in the South, the East and the North. But let’s not confuse cause and effect here. A truly sovereign USA or EU would be a superb partner for Russia in so many ways that she cannot but do everything she can to try to change current US and EU perceptions.

So what could Russia do?

I will immediately exclude all actions which would be illegal under international and Russian law. The fact that a political Neanderthal acts like a thug is no reason for civilized people to emulate him or retaliate in kind. Each country, each nation, has to decide for itself whether the rule of law (national or international) is something which matters to it or not.

However, I believe that there are legal actions the Russians could take.

For one thing, the Russians could get much, much more assertive at the UN. I get it, Lavrov had to say that he was sure that Trump and Pompeo had nothing to do with the latest illegal denial of visas of Russian officials to the UN: he was trying to help Trump who probably really had nothing to do with this. But Pompeo?! Of course Lavrov and everybody else understand that this could not have happened without Pompeo’s go-ahead. How much did Lavrov’s diplomatic talk help Trump? I don’t think that it made any difference. And it did make Lavrov look plain silly (a very rare case indeed!) in the eyes of the western public. Was it worth it? I don’t think so!

Next, so far the Russians have failed to really put pressure on the USA worldwide, but the reality is that she has plenty of options to hurt US security, political and economic interests. For example in Africa where Russia (and China) have gained a lot of traction in recent years or in Latin America where Russia could provide much more

political support to opposition groups to local *comprador* regimes (say in Brazil, Colombia or even Mexico!). I don't mean do what the USSR did and waste millions on local Communist parties or by single-handedly supporting the local economies. But the Russians could begin using political methods (covert and overt) to show the US intelligence community (which will immediately detect this) that there is a price to pay.

What would be important in this case would be to start very "low", with a few actions here and there, - just enough to get the US Americans to notice and then to protest in back-channels. Once this happens, the Russians could simply say "you treat us as hostiles, fine, but there will be a price to pay". The first time around Uncle Shmuel is unlikely to notice, but once this becomes a pattern, especially an increasing one, trust me, he will notice!

And, consider this: the USA is already, and has been since at least 2013, engaged in a full-spectrum aggression on Russia and they have pretty much exhausted all nasty measures which the USA could implement more or less safely. Escalating further by, say, disconnecting Russia from the SWIFT, or try to impose a no-fly zone over Syria or try to disconnect Russia from the Internet, or blockade Russian ships – these are all measures which are often mentioned, but which would definitely trigger a dangerous Russian retaliation. The Russians have made several (very uncharacteristic) warnings about that and the US Americans most likely understood that perfectly. This is also what happened when the Ukronazis were on the verge of an attack on Russia and Putin decided to (again very uncharacteristically) warn Kiev that any such attack would have major "*consequences for the Ukrainian statehood*". All the Ukrainians, most of them being either Russian or understanding the Russian political culture, immediately understood what that meant and the much announced offensive was scrapped.

Conclusion: Russians still often suck at PR

Yes, RT was huge progress, and even Sputnik probably has a function for the western audiences. And ladies like Zakharova sure are a HUGE progress compared to the stone-faced Soviet spokesmen. But, simply put, this is not enough.

Furthermore, even inside the Russian society there are real patriots (not just western agents) who are getting mighty fed-up with the Kremlin's, let's kindly call it "meek" or "hyper-polite" attitude. Meekness is a great quality, so are good manners.

But other attitudes and actions are needed when faced with rogue thug-like regimes, especially when those regimes are both self-worshiping and appallingly ignorant.

I have already mentioned in the past that I believed that the “retirement age reform” was a mistake and that it would create a new, patriotic, opposition to the Kremlin’s policies and even, but to a lesser degree, to Putin himself. This did happen, even if Putin’s last-minute intervention kinda softened the blow and, eventually, this topic was, if not forgotten, then at least not the top issue.

Then there has been, for years now, a weird policy of apparent appeasement of the Nazi regime in Kiev. Since Putin’s very public threat, since he refused to even take phone calls from Poroshenko and since the Russians have FINALLY begun handing out passports to the Ukrainians, things have somewhat improved on that front. But for YEARS the Russian opposition (patriotic or not at all) was warning about an imminent “sellout” of Novorussia and that hurt the Kremlin (even if that sellout never happened).

I think that it is high time for Putin or Lavrov to start “not taking calls” from Trump or Pompeo, initially figuratively but, if needed, maybe even literally.

As for the patriotic opposition to Putin, there would be a very easy way to deal with it:

1. start listening to it and show much more firmness
2. finally give the boot to some of the more toxic 5th columnists in the government
3. invite that opposition for a real national debate in various public forums (Valdai, TV, radio, etc.)

I think that many of these patriotic opponent of the Kremlin would be glad to fully support Putin if he did that. If he fails to do so, this opposition will only grow. Right now the Kremlin is “lucky” that this patriotic opposition has not succeeded (yet?) in presenting a single halfway credible political figure to lead it. To my great regret, most of the folks involved are angry, bitter and deeply resentful that they have been almost completely ignored by the Kremlin. But this will inevitably change, especially if the current government continues to look weak, indecisive and not truly patriotic at all.

Thus, I believe that, both for external and internal reasons, the Kremlin needs to develop and implement a much firmer policy towards US-ordered kidnapping of

Russian citizens. I also believe that this will happen once the political costs for the Kremlin of its current “politeness” become even higher.

One more thing – remember the US seizure of Russian diplomatic buildings in the USA? Putin’s response was very typically Russian: he invited the children of US diplomats to Christmas ceremony in the Kremlin. For a short while, he did look like the proverbial “better man”. But what since? NOTHING! Another President sits in the White House and the buildings are still under illegal US control. Did Putin’s “better man” attitude do anybody any good? Especially in the long term? I sure don’t think so. There is a simple truth that every cop knows: narcissistic thugs do not appreciate good manners. There is a lesson here.

The Saker

PS: I just saw this video of Iumasheva explaining what happened to her:



<https://youtu.be/M8W6-5EzSB0>

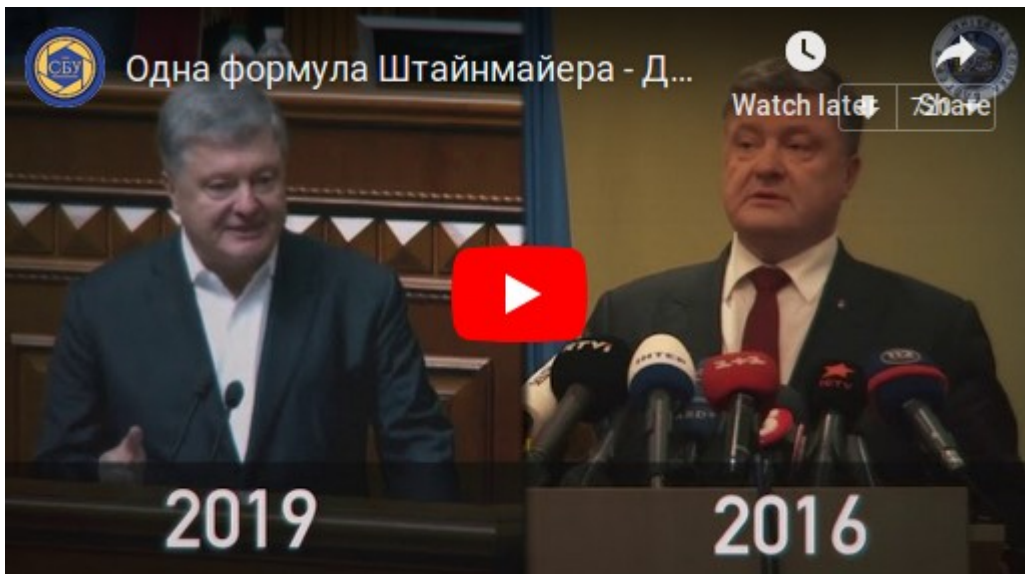
Zelenskii in free fall

October 16, 2019

Well, that didn't take too long. Let me summarize what just happened in the Ukraine.

Everything was looking oh-so-promising and then suddenly...

First, Trump, Macron and Merkel apparently told Zelenskii that he had to sign the so-called Steinmeier formula, which basically spells out the sequence of confidence-building and de-escalation measures foreseen by the Minsk Agreements. Now, you would be excused for thinking that this is a no-brainer. After all, the Minsk Agreements were ratified by the UNSC (which makes them mandatory, no "if" or "buts" about this!) and it was Poroshenko who agreed to the Steinmeier formula. Heck, in 2016 he sure did not have a problem with it, but in 2019 he now calls the self-same formula a Russian invention and that there is no such thing as a Steinmeier formula, see for yourself (in Ukrainian only):



<https://youtu.be/VN4OEP1QOmo>

So what is the big deal?

The problem of the “non-existing Nazis”

Zelenskii’s problem can be summed up in a simple sentence: the non-existing Nazis. Well, at least in the past all the Neo-Nazis *cum* Jew-haters were constantly trying to convince us that there are no Nazis in the Ukraine; apparently, my use of the term Ukronazi really set them off. Then came the election in which an absolute majority of Ukrainians rejected Poroshenko’s drive for war and voted for Zelenskii. If the Ukrainian people voted en masse to elect an anti-war/pro-peace Jew, surely the Ukronazis were just a small minority of fringe individuals, right?

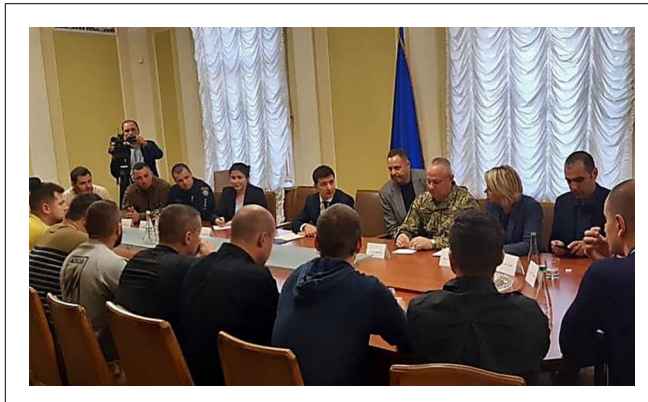
Wrong! Very very wrong!

And if those who were whitewashing the Ukrainian Nazis (obviously to obfuscate their real ideology and power) had paid closer attention they would have seen signs of real Nazi power all over this election.

First, there was the remarkable change in tone in Zelenskii’s rhetoric. Just like so many politicians (including Trump!), he radically changed his tune and clearly tried to say one thing when speaking to the general Ukrainian public and quite another when meeting with the Nazis or nationalist exiles in the USA.

You could say that there is a “Nazi deep state” in the Ukraine which, just like the other deep states out there, can weather any elected president and quickly reassert its control over whomever the people elected.

You don’t believe me when I say that he actually hosted the Ukronazis “fringe minority”? Fine, see for yourself:



In the photo above, Zelenskii is sitting with your typical gang of Ukronazi skinheads, including members of the infamous Azov death-squad, and he is trying really hard to charm them while they, very publicly, have threatened him with a new Maidan.

And this is not an isolated case or a fluke.

Zelenskii's prime minister went to a concert for an openly Nazi "Scream" music group called Sekira Peruna and thanked the crowd of veterans of the "anti terrorist operation" (i.e. thugs from the Ukronazi deathsquads) for being there and for saving the Ukraine. I did not find any English language translation of the typical lyrics of Sekira Peruna, but I assure you that they contain all the obligatory nonsense which the Nazi ideology is built upon (see [here](#) for a very good article with more details on this event and the Nazis involved).

Check out what their concert posters look like (shown here on the right) or, even better, check out the website of this group: <http://sokyraperuna.com/>

'Nuff said, I think.

So what is going on here?

Basically, exactly what I predicted as soon as Zelenskii was elected in my article "[Zelenskii's dilemma](#)" in which I wrote: (emphasis added)

*The Nazi-occupied Ukraine is not a democracy, but a plutocracy combined with an ochlocracy. The oligarchs are still there, as are the neo-Nazi mobs and death squads. And that creates an immense problem for Zelenskii: this new Rada might well represent the views of a majority of the Ukrainian people, but **the real power in the country is not concentrated in the Rada at all: it is in the streets** (...) The people of the Ukraine desperately want peace. For the time being, the Rada reflects this overwhelmingly important fact. I say "for the time being" because what will happen next is that the various forces and individuals who currently support Zelenskii have done so just to gain power.*



*They do not, however, have a common ideological platform or even a common program. As soon as things go south (which they will inevitably do) many (most?) of these folks will turn against Zelenskii and side with whoever can muster the biggest crowds and mete out the most violence. Now that he got elected, Zelenskii quasi-instantly switched to the exact same rhetoric as what got Poroshenko so severely defeated. Why? Because Zelenskii is afraid that the neo-Nazi mobs and death squads will be unleashed against him at the very first opportunity. In fact, the neo-Nazis have already begun promising a new Maidan. The truth is that **Zelenskii has to choose between acting on the will of the people and face the wrath of the neo-Nazis or do the will of the neo-Nazis and face the wrath of the people: tertium non datur!** So far, Zelenskii has apparently decided that talking is all he is going to do simply because his triumphant electoral victories have landed him in the middle of an immense minefield, and **any steps he takes from now on could cost him very dearly.** Right now, in the short term, the neo-Nazi mobs represent a much bigger danger to Zelenskii than the (disorganized, demoralized and generally apathetic) people. But this will inevitably change as the economic and political situation gets worse.*

We see exactly that scenario unfolding before our eyes. Zelenskii took not one, but three very real, if small, steps. First, he ordered a pullback of some regular Ukrainian armed forces from a few important segments of the line of contact; then he agreed to a relatively minor prisoner exchange and, finally, he ordered the Ukrainian delegation to sign the Steinmeier formula. The prisoner exchange went okay for both sides. The Ukronazis soon categorically rejected any withdrawal and they publicly promised to immediately re-occupy any village vacated by the regular army and they rejected what they call the “Russian” or “Putin” formula. So far there were a few attempts to block the thugs of the Azov battalion, but after a few minor clashes, the Azov people passed the police line. And now, the Nazi organized mass protests in 300 Ukrainian cities. I could post lots of videos here, but that would take a lot of space. If you want to get a feel for what took place today, go to YouTube and copy-paste the following search query “протесты в украине” into the search bar, and then use the filter option and chose “this week”: you will easily get many hours of video and you don’t even need to understand a word of Ukrainian to immediately get it.

There is another very important factor which you will almost never see on these videos or on any public statements, and that is that there are a number of civil and even criminal cases currently being brought to trial in the Ukraine against a host of

officials of the *ancient régime* including even against Poroshenko (11-14 separate investigations just for him already!) These men (Poroshenko, Parubii, Turchinov, etc.) now have absolutely no choice but to try to overthrow Zelenskii.

Just like the US Dems need a coup against Trump (in the form of an impeachment or something else) because the Clinton-Biden gang now risks real, hard, jail time, so do the former Ukronazi leaders now need a coup against Zelenskii or they go to jail.

Initially, it appeared that Trump had given Poroshenko some personal security guarantees, but everybody knows how much the US President's security "guarantees" are worth (just ask the Kurds!). So Poroshenko did not flee the country. It now appears that some of the people behind Zelenskii (aka Kolomoiskii) are out to get the "Poroshenko clan & Associates" – Poroshenko has to either topple Zelenskii or run away abroad. There are also rumors that the US "deep state" (as opposed to the Trump Administration) is now putting pressure on Zelenskii to stop these investigations. Thus, the current battle between Trump and the Neocons and their "deep state" has now spilled over into the Ukraine and it appears that various US interest groups are now creating local Ukrainian surrogates whom they will use in their struggle against each other.

Furthermore, a real possibility opened up now that all sorts of previously buried issues will be investigated by the Ukrainian prosecutors including:

1. An official and true investigation to find out who opened fired on the police and demonstrators during the Euromaidan
2. MH-17
3. Ukronazi atrocities in the Donbass
4. Human rights violations in the Ukraine (where over 1000 political prisoners are still being held) starting with innumerable cases of horrible torture of detainees (in secret torture camps, *à la* CIA, including an especially infamous one in Mariupol).
5. Poroshenko's role in the "Crimea Bridge provocation"
6. All the many murders of journalists and opponents of the Nazis beginning with the murder of Oles Buzina
7. A quasi infinite list of war profiteering, corruption, fraud, etc. etc. etc.

Simply put: there is no way that the Ukronazis will just stand by and let those investigations proceed. And while it is true that numerically the Ukronazis are a small

minority in the Ukraine, there is plenty enough of them to terrify Zelenskii and his handlers, especially considering that they are 1) well armed 2) many have frontline combat experience and 3) that they are willing not only to engage in “regular” violence, but also to commit atrocities and engage in terrorism (they did plenty of both in the Donbass).

Zelenskii does have a number of things going for him: first, the mandate of the people (though his popularity is already down from 73% to 66% – which is still very big), his legal prerogatives as the President and Commander in Chief and the support of Kolomoiskii’s strong network of international connections, especially in Israel.

But that is all rather theoretical so far.

All Zelenskii has done, besides hosting the skinheads in his office, was to make a 14 hour long interview with a group of reporters. Yes, fourteen hours. Alas, all he achieved was to show that he is a much better actor than politician. In fact, most experts seem to agree that in his role as President Zelenskii is a total failure who speaks a lot, says a lot of silly things when he does, and seems to be absolutely unable to take any real action.

At the time of writing (Wed 16th) the leader of the Ukronazis has given Zelenskii 10 days to yield to all the demands of the opposition. If not, he has promised to trigger a new Maidan and bring millions of people to the streets.

Yup. The “tiny” “fringe” and otherwise “non-existing” Nazis have now given Zelenskii an ultimatum.

Zelenskii is in free fall: Trump, Macron and Merkel are demanding that he abide by the decisions of the UNSC, the Minsk Agreements and the Steinmeier formula. The Russians have clearly indicated that unless tangible and real progress is made in the implementation of this formula, there will be nothing else to discuss. The Ukraine is basically bankrupt and desperately needs both Novorussian coal and Russian gas. Furthermore, only a removal of the self-defeating barriers and boycotts imposed by the former regime against any trade or even communications with Russia could begin to kick-start the economy of what is now clearly a failed state.

Yet the Nazis will oppose any and all such measures, with violence if needed. As for Zelenskii, he appears to be in a no win situation: no matter what he does next, things will only get worse. Thus the most likely outcome of all these processes will be,

in the short term, further futile attempts by Zelenskii to appease the Nazis (thereby alienating the general population), in the middle term a violent confrontation, followed in the long term by (the probably inevitable) break-up of the Ukraine into separately much more viable parts.

The Saker

UPDATE: I just heard that the Ukraine is now demanding that 1) the LNR/DNR dissolve themselves, 2) that they have to leave the Ruble zone and switch back to the Hrivna, 3) that the local military forces have to be disbanded and, finally, 4) that Kiev wants the total control of the LDNR/Russian border.

Well, good luck with that, folks! I hope they are not holding their breath (they aren't – they are just trying to find a pretext to renege on their legal and political obligations...)

Drazha Mikhailovich: the man upon whom the future Serbia will be rebuilt!

October 11, 2019

This is a very special day for me, because the topics I will be covering are all very dear to my heart and to my entire family. Following the Bolshevik revolution my family and another 1.5 million Russians fled their beloved motherland at the end of the civil war. All our so-called European “allies” immediately betrayed us (what else is new?), organized an intervention and backed the russophobic Bolshevik regime (yes, helping both side in turn, like the Empire today in, say, the Kurdish areas of Iraq and Syria). All except one: the Serbs which, at the time were triumphant (WWI) but also had to rebuild a war ravaged Serbia, with most of its infrastructure destroyed, and coping with the death of nearly 30% of its entire population.

They welcomed us with open arms and generous hearts; they recognized all the former Russian officials and officers in their pre-1917 capacity, and they gave refuge to the bishops, priests and faithful of the [Russian Orthodox Church in Exile](#) whose birthplace became the city of [Sremski Karlovci](#) in Serbia.

My family lived in Belgrade and my mother was born in the Topčidersko Brdo neighborhood of Belgrade. All her life she spoke a perfect Serbian, like a native; as for my Godmother, she was a pure Serb (and she also spoke Russian to perfection). I want to mention that to explain that the ties between my family and the Serbian nation were both strong and deep.

I strongly believe that all Russians owe a great debt of gratitude to the Serbian people, even those who don't know about this (more about that later). And not just for how they accepted our refugees, but for many other instances of Russian-Serbian friendship in history.

The contrast between the Serbs and our so-called “Orthodox” or, even more so, Slavic brothers could not be greater. We even have a special word for that: the Serbs we call “братья” (meaning “brothers”) whereas the rest of them many of us simply call “братушки” which is hard to translate but I suppose “one-way-brothers” or even “pretend brothers” is adequate. We all know how many times our “one-way-brothers” have betrayed us, even if they owe the existence of their countries to Russia (I personally have an ancestor who died while liberating Bulgaria from the Ottoman

yoke!). In fact, they are still at it nowadays (not every single individual, of course, but taken as a nation, this is true beyond any doubt – just look how they allow their national territories to be used by NATO to try to threaten Russia) . Next time they have a problem with their neighbors, they can ask NATO (good luck with that!) – because we sure ain't coming again. **Ever!**



But today, I want to touch on a very special kind of Serb, the much vilified, slandered and otherwise hated Serbian **Chetniks** of the Yugoslav army and their leader, the Serbian hero **Draza Mihailovich** (Дража Михаиловић).

I had the rare fortune of meeting a few Serbian officers in my life, from those who fought against NATO during the AngloZionist aggression against Bosnia, Serbia and its Kosovo province to the old Chetnik officers and soldiers who created the most effective and by far the biggest resistance movement to Hitler prior to the invasion of the USSR. I also met quite a few Russian, pre-1917 imperial officers and their families (mostly in Argentina) and I

vividly remember how these old soldiers spoke with a heartfelt admiration and gratitude about Mihailovich himself and his men. So close were the Russians and Serbians in exile that they often inter-married (like my uncle and my Godmother).

My purpose here is not to write a bio of Mihailovich, or even to introduce him. For that purpose I will post a truly exceptionally well made film which is now freely available on YouTube (for how long? Download and make copies, folks!) and which pretty much explains it all, in fascinating details.

No, what I want to do today is much more modest. To share with you the reasons for my belief that any future Serbia worthy of being called Serbia can only be and will be founded on the memory of Draza Mihailovich and on the centuries of honored Serbian heroes that he epitomized.

[Sidebar: I know that I have a lot of communist readers and friends, and I ask them for their patience and understanding. The truth is that those calling themselves Communists in 2019 are very different from the type of Communists which would be found in the Europe of 1900-1946. In some way this is very bad, since most modern so-called “communists” have never read Marx or Engels, never-mind Lenin or Hegel. But in other ways, this is very good, since modern communists do not consider patriotism as “bourgeois” or religion the “opium of the people”. Friends, a long time ago I wrote that the “Whites” and the “Reds” (using Russian categories but which can, I think, be transposed to the Serbian reality) will never agree on the past, even if they could agree on the future. What comes next is about the past, so let’s simply agree to disagree and not let this difference in opinion affect us, okay?]

The resemblances between the fate of the Russian nation and the Serbs are many, as are the differences. But one thing which we sure have in common: the communists who took power over us did all they could to deprive us from our historical memory. Worse, they slandered our nations, our traditions, our cultures and our faiths for two very basic reasons:

1. They absolutely hated us, both Russians and Serbs
2. They had to justify not only their reforms (forced social engineering, really), but the terror they unleashed

By this mechanism Czar Nicholas II became a weak imbecile, his wife a mistress of Rasputin and an agent of the Germans, pre-1917 Russia a “prison of the people” (btw – (prewar Yugoslavia in communist propaganda was also called a “prison of peoples”, with the Serbs as jailers), Russian Orthodoxy “retrograde” and “ritualistic”, the Russian people “chauvinists” and the Russian ruling classes (old nobility, Petrine aristocracy, merchants, industrialists, clergy, philosophers, intelligentsia, etc.) all became “class enemies” of the people (in 1922 the Bolsheviks even managed to expel Russia’s leading intellectuals in the infamous “[Philosopher’s ship](#)“! These were the lucky ones, by the way, the others died in the Soviet GuLAG or were simply shot). Furthermore, the role of the US, Germany and the UK in financing the subversion of Russia was totally obfuscated.

In Serbia a very similar thing happened, only later. You will see in the movie itself to what degree the true story of Draza Mihailovich and the Chetniks was corrupted and perverted in the (new) official *doxa* of the AngloZionist Empire.

I ask you to please watch this movie before reading on.



<https://youtu.be/yymGISP-COc>

Personally, I am deeply moved by this film, especially by the old Chetnik shown at the end.

I had the fortune of meeting the “tail end” of the world this old Chetnik soldier knew.

His tears are my tears.

In 2015, the high court of Serbia officially rehabilitated General Dragoljub “Draza” Mihailovic, repudiating the farcical trial staged by the communist regime in 1946. “*The court established that the controversial ruling was made in an illegitimate trial for political and ideological reasons, and, under the law on rehabilitation, the decision cannot be appealed*”. –inserbia.info.

While this was an important first step in repudiating the communist falsification of history, the quisling government and educational system of Serbia continues to be

guided by old communists and the foreign successors of the Vatican/Vienna school, who've spent centuries appropriating Serbian achievements and rewriting several millennia of Serbian/Slavic history.

I find personalities like Czar Nicholas II or Draza Mihailovich extremely important because they are what I call “polarizers”; that is, personalities who have been both despised and hated as well as revered and loved. Why is that important? Because if you pick the right “polarizing personality” you can very quickly establish how much your interlocutor knows and what his real values are. There are many more such personalities, beginning even with Christ our Lord Himself, of course

(I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law; Luke 12: 49-53).

Of course, this is not about dividing families or creating strife, but about showing “your true face” and how much you are willing to sacrifice for your values. By the way, in my usage, “polarizing personality” is value neutral. Thus Hitler would be a very good example of an evil polarizing personality.

In fact, Czar Nicholas II and Draza Mihailovich have many things in common, but I want to mention two: they both refused to leave their people even though it meant sure death, and their murderers were so afraid of their MORAL (not legal or, even less so, military) authority that they not only massacred them (in the case of Czar Nicholas with his entire family, children included) and concealed the place where their bodies were destroyed and dumped. Personally, I even see a degree of resemblance between the two men, especially in their eyes: they are both filled with a special sad kindness, a kind of Christ-like meek resignation. They both perfectly knew that they would not only be murdered, but smeared, vilified by many clueless generations. I can only hope that they also knew that the historical truth would one day be restored!

Why is that so important? Because you cannot rebuild a civilization on fuzzy, lukewarm and otherwise uninspiring models. I would even argue that any action needs to be predicated on a solid spiritual/ideological basis to be meaningful (you just don't do meaningful things just to do them, our most important actions are often just a means towards a higher goal). This is, by the way, a great weakness of the current AngloZionist empire: while it does inspire plenty of derision and hate, it probably stopped truly inspiring anybody decades ago – yet another sure sign of decay.

Of course, I am acutely aware that there are many Russians who don't think highly of Czar Nicholas II or even still despise him for being the superficial, weak and dumb moron the Soviet propaganda machine (and the liberal-democratic Masonic propaganda machine before that!) painted him to be, just as there are no doubt Serbs who either dislike/despise Draza because of the Titoist propaganda. In most cases this is just simple ignorance. Once the freedom to investigate the past is truly restored (like it is in Russia today), the inevitable always happens: those who were orphans of their own history and culture gradually rediscover them and then they operate a radical ideological change (who would have predicted in the 1980s or even 1990s that a Russian defense minister would convert to Orthodoxy and publicly make the sign of the cross before a military parade or that a Russian contingent in Khmeimim would have not one, but two churches built on that base?).

Think of Russia and Serbia as “[Petri dishes](#)” in which the bacteria of historical memory have just begun to grow and, rather than looking at the current number of “bacteria with a restored historical memory”, look at the nature of these bacteria and the nutrient rich-soup in which they are located.

Our countries are the Petri dish. We are the bacteria.

Bon appétit!

I vividly remember how the AngloZionist propaganda machine described the Serbian people in general, and especially the Chetniks, as genocidal murders hellbent on “ethnic cleansing” and “genocide” (Serbs, Croats and Bosnian-Muslims are from the same ethnicity; only their religions are different; “Bosniac” is a term popularized by the US State Department). Most of these lies have long been debunked by numerous authors, the truth is already out there but, just like with the Gulf of Tonkin

Resolution, the Kennedy assassination, GLADIO or 9/11, the truth is out there, but very few care.

The truth is that the western civilization has decayed to a state which could be described as “truth free”. A simpler way to put it is that for most people (alas, most people are still brainwashed) facts simply do not matter. The truly dull ones will only seek “ideological comfort” while most of the rest simply don’t care as long as their current consumption rates can be maintained or, better, increased. The rest, for them, is basically irrelevant.

Inside Yugoslavia a similar process of “induced amnesia” and “historical reprogramming” took place during the Tito years and even after. Even modern Serbian politicians, plenty of which are corrupt and dependent on US or EU “grants”, continue to parrot the Titoist propaganda. But deep inside (some of) the Serbian people the memory of Draza is just as alive as the memory of Czar Nicholas II is alive in the memory of (some of) the Russian people. This historical memory has not been restored to our nations, but there is already enough of this memory currently coming out from its clandestinity to worry our “liberals” and “democrats” and to absolutely outrage the western media.

This being said, I don’t believe for one second that Russia or Serbia will ever become a monarchy again (in spite of being a monarchist myself). In fact, I hope this never happens because if it does, it will be a pseudo-monarchy run by some parliament and with a useless parasite *à la* Queen Elizabeth II totally under the control of Masonic loges. A real Orthodox monarchy can only exist in a truly Orthodox country and with a truly free Orthodox Church, not in a country where the vast majority of Orthodox Christians are truly Orthodox only in name, in a “cultural” sense, and who see Orthodoxy as a national rather than as a spiritual phenomenon. In fact, I believe that we are already well into the “End Times” in which the Church of Christ will shrink down to the “small flock” mentioned in the Gospels and Apocalypse. These are times in which an Orthodox monarchy cannot exist since the τὸ κατέχον (“the [one] who restrains”) has been “*taken out of the way*” (2 Thes 2:6-7) because Nicholas II was this “*katehon*” and now the “*mystery of iniquity doth already work*” (there is also the [famous prophecy about Moscow the Third Rome](#), a status which that city lost in 1917, which concludes with the words “*and there shall be no fourth*”).

But, assuming we don't all die in a nuclear war courtesy of the Neocons, neither can the future Russia or Serbia be founded on the values, policies and actions of figures like Lenin or Tito (if only because their countries – the USSR and Yugoslavia – don't exist anymore; besides, Lenin hated Russia as much as Tito hated Serbia).

A couple of years ago I wrote an essay entitled "[Kosovo will be liberated](#)" in which I suggested the following thought experiment:

Imagine for a few minutes that for some reason the Empire collapsed. No more NATO and probably no more EU. Or maybe just a little NATO and just a little EU left in spite of it all. But, more importantly, no [Camp Bondsteel](#). What do you think would happen?

I gave my answer about what I believe would happen *externally*; about how the Serbian nation will *inevitably* be reunited and Kosovo liberated. Today, I am trying to imagine what would happen *inside* Serbia, before Kosovo can be liberated.

Internally, **the *conditio sine qua non* for a rebirth of Serbia is the restoration of the historical truth** and that means first and foremost to restore the truth about the cowardly slaughter of well over 1,500,000 Serbs by Croats, Bosnian Muslims, Albanians, Bulgarians and Hungarians (yes, this was a real, full-scale genocide; the original Papist-Croatian (*not* German Nazi!!) plan was to [convert 1/3rd of Serbs, expel another 1/3rd and murder the remaining 1/3rd](#)) by an informal but no less toxic combination of *real* Nazi-collaborators (Croats and Bosnian-Muslims), the genocidal policies of the Papacy in the so-called "Independent State of Croatia", the actions of the Communist Partisans, the typical "grand game" policies and betrayals of the British (who used the Serbs as cannon fodder against elite SS divisions), the active support of the Soviet Union and the total indifference of the US and the self-centered nations of western Europe.

While one WWII genocide is exploited and propagandized, the Genocide of the Serbian people is hideously kept hidden. Their executioners, to this day, are celebrated by the empire and aided in their continued attempts to erase the memory of their victims. Dr. Gideon Greiff, Israel's foremost expert on Auschwitz, whose recently published book "Jasenovac, the Auschwitz of the Balkans", details the killing of over 800,000 Serbs, in the Jasenovac death camp. According to Dr. Greiff, Jasenovac, one of many Vatican sanctioned death camps, in the Nazi puppet state of Croatia, there were "57 different ways of killing the victims". "I am sure that there

weren't as many in Auschwitz. It's a world record. There has not been something of the kind in the history of the humankind," he said, adding that there should be no doubt about the number of the (overall) victims, and recalling that an investigation by a joint Croatian-Serbian commission showed that this number was 1.4 million (all quotes from [a television interview with Dr. Greiff on Serbian Television](#)). Finally, to learn of the true horrors faced by the Serbian nation in this monstrous Papist genocide attempt of the Serbian nation, make sure to check out this webpage:

<http://www.reformation.org/holocaust.html>

It will give you all the details about what the author called "*The most horrifying religious massacre of the 20th century*".

As for Dr Greiff's book "*Jasenovac – Auschwitz of the Balkans*" is [available on Amazon](#), but at a very steep price (I sure cannot afford it and I wish it was available online somewhere).

This restoration of the truth will have to inevitably include Tito's communists murder of tens of thousands Serbian intellectuals, Orthodox priests, Chetniks and their families, after the end of WWII.

Furthermore, all the countries, public entities and personalities which directed these crimes will have to be exposed. Not to stick them into a Nuremberg-like tribunal (not a bad idea, but it was poorly implemented; besides, for Russia and Serbia, most evil doers are now long dead anyway), but to stick their memory in a "historical tribunal" in which historians will be the defending and prosecuting lawyers and our people the jury (God, obviously, being the only true judge).

Simply put, I will use a metaphor of Alexander Solzhenitsyn here. The relationship of the Russian civilization to the Bolshevik state, and the relationship of the Serbian civilization with the Titoist state is the same one as can be found between a healthy body and a malignant tumor: yes, they definitely share a lot of common DNA (Russia, for example, has always been a collectivistic and "social" society), but they also have enough differences to make the latter a mortal threat to the former. Furthermore, just as with a malignant tumor, it is extremely difficult to fully eradicate just the tumor without affecting the healthy tissues. Solzhenitsyn added that in his opinion the Russian nation will need about two centuries to fully heal from the effects of Bolshevism.

So this is not about doing what the Communists did and trashing our past just from another point of view. There were great heroes and very good people who lived in our Communist past, and great feats were accomplished in numerous fields during these years. It is about restoring the historical truth, something which every honest person should support and even participate in. Otherwise our people will look like prisoners freed from a concentration camp but who continue to wear the prison clothes given to them by their (now former) tormentors.

Truth be told, since 2000 Russia has managed to accomplish a truly miraculous rebirth, especially in the light of the true war (even if this war is currently about 80% informational, 15% economic and only 5% kinetic) of the AngloZionists against Russia. Serbia is in a much worse situation, in some ways almost as bad as the Russia of the 1990s. But I am confident that a “Serbian Putin” will appear, *apparently* from “nowhere”, and that the Serbian people will rally around him/her just like the Russians rallied around Putin.

Finally, when the time comes for the Serbian nation to rise up and liberate itself, I am confident that the recent examples of Russians fighting for Serbia in Bosnia and Serbs fighting for Russia in the Donbass will inspire not just volunteers, but whoever sits in the Kremlin.



Serbian volunteers in Novorussia and their Russian comrades in arms.

To illustrate just how much the truth has been distorted regarding the Serbs, whose honor and courage, have been documented, both by allies and enemies throughout history, I strongly encourage you to read the last sermon of pastor Freidrich Griesendorf, published in the Eversburg (German) newspaper: “Last sermon of a German clergymen” (reposted and translated [here](#))

I now leave you with the two videos mentioned in the main film.

First, the interview of US vets about their experience with the Chetniks:



<https://youtu.be/L0vUQNqB6jw>

and, finally, the Hollywood movie made about this war:



https://youtu.be/5wvU8_XOJNQ

And, last but most definitely not least, there is now an extremely valuable website fully dedicated to the memory of Draza Mihailovich:

<http://drazamovie.com/>

In conclusion, I want to address all those who have a very different view of Draza, the Serbs or anything else. What I presented here is my personal, absolutely sincere, point of view. But, of course, I may be wrong (I often am!).

I not only have no problem with fact-based and logically-constructed criticisms, I sincerely INVITE THEM! However, I have to warn you that any attempts to simply spew a load of the garden variety hatred towards Draza, the Serbs or anything else will be intercepted and sent to where it belongs: the trash bin of our servers and of history! We have already heard it all, courtesy of the legacy AngloZionist media. We don't need that repeated here.

The Saker

ADDENDUM: since Draza, the Chetniks and the Serbs have now been described as monsters, I decided to add a number of quotes which not only show that in the past they were considered as heroes, but also show what some prominent historical figures had to say about them.

1. The Hero Whom You Gave to History Has Not His Like in Our Time

“Twenty years after the death of Draza Mihailovich he is undimmed in his glory as a defender of liberty against the Fascist terror, who defended it also against the Communist terror. He had no moment of weakness, nor of bitterness. I know no instance where he reproached those who were guilty of his betrayal.

Twenty years ago I knew he was innocent of all charges against him, and since then I have had many further proofs of his innocence. His abandonment was a crime, and like all crimes it brought no real profit to the criminals.

I loved your nation before the war, I have loved and honored it more and more as the years have gone by and I have seen that the hero whom you gave to history has not his like in our time.”

— Dame Rebecca West (to the Serbs July 8, 1966)

2. As I sit writing these lines in the early dawn before a motionless sea, Mihailovich is facing the firing squad. I am not concerned with what the first of the Maquisards is supposed to have done or not done; what worries me is that nobody bothers about him

— George Bernanos, 1946

3. The British press ‘splashed’ the German reward for Tito, but only one paper mentioned (in small print) the reward for Mihailovich: and the charges of collaborating with the Germans continued.

— George Orwell, 1946

4. General Dragoljub Mihailovich distinguished himself in an outstanding manner as Commander-in-Chief of the Yugoslavian Army Forces and later as Minister of War by organizing and leading important resistance forces against the enemy which occupied Yugoslavia, from December 1941 to December 1944. Through the undaunted efforts of

his troops, many United States airmen were rescued and returned safely to friendly control. General Mihailovich and his forces, although lacking adequate supplies, and fighting under extreme hardships, contributed materially to the Allied cause, and were instrumental in obtaining a final Allied victory.

— **Harry S. Truman, March 29, 1948**

5. The ultimate tragedy of Draza Mihailovic cannot erase the memory of his heroic and often lonely struggle against the twin tyrannies that afflicted his people, Nazism and Communism. He knew that totalitarianism, whatever name it might take, is the death of freedom. He thus became a symbol of resistance to all those across the world who have had to fight a similar heroic and lonely struggle against totalitarianism. Mihailovic belonged to Yugoslavia; his spirit now belongs to all those who are willing to fight for freedom.

— **Ronald Reagan, September 8, 1979**

6. “The unparalleled rescue of over 500 American Airmen from capture by the Enemy Occupation Forces in Yugoslavia during World War II by General Dragoljub Mihailovich and his Chetnik Freedom Fighters for which this “Legion of Merit” medal was awarded by President Harry S. Truman, also represents a token of deep personal appreciation and respect by all those rescued American Airmen and their descendants, who will be forever grateful.”

___ (NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF AMERICAN AIRMEN RESCUED BY GENERAL MihailovičH – 1985)

7. “General Draza Mihailovic was a patriot, a brave soldier and a gallant ally of the United States and every nation that went to war in the early forties to destroy the tyrannies that sought to enslave our world. Hundreds of American pilots owe their lives to General Mihailovic and his forces and the American people will never forget that debt. As long as there are patriots in any nation, the name of General Draza Mihailovic will be remembered and revered”

– **President Richard Nixon (April 21, 1966).**

8. WHY MIHAILOVICH MATTERS

“As an American, I bow my head in shame whenever I think of the terribly mistaken policy which led the Allied leaders in World War II to abandon General Draza Mihailovich and throw their support instead to the communist cohorts of Marshal Josip Broz Tito. It was an unbelievable aberration of policy and of justice perpetrated by the Allies.

Mihailovich was the first insurgent in Europe. It was he who raised the flag of resistance to the Nazi occupier – and by his action he inspired the formation of resistance movements in all the subjugated countries.

He resisted the Nazis at the time when the Soviet Union and the communists were still collaborating with them – and his early resistance, by slowing down the Nazi timetable, was probably responsible for preventing the fall of Moscow.

The contributions of Mihailovich to the Allied cause were the subject of tributes by General Eisenhower, General De Gaulle, Field Marshal Lord Alexander, Admiral Harwood, Anthony Eden, President Truman, and, at later date of President Richard Nixon. For example, on August 16, 1942, three top ranking British officers, Admiral Harwood, General Auchinleck, and Air Marshal Tedder, sent the following joint wire to Mihailovich: “With admiration we are following your directed operations which are of inestimable value to the Allied cause.”

Today, no informed person takes seriously the communist charges that Mihailovich collaborated with the Germans, or the proceedings of the communist show trial in Belgrade which resulted in his execution. The communists made the nature of their injustice clear when they announced in advance of the trial, that Mihailovich would be executed after a ‘fair’ trial. And they also made it clear when they refused to take the evidence of the American officers who served with him or of the American airmen who were rescued by him.

Colonel Robert H. McDowell, chief of the last American mission to General Mihailovich, and perhaps the most experienced intelligence officer to serve with either side in Yugoslavia during World War II, took the time after the War to go through the German intelligence files on Yugoslavia. Not only did he find no evidence that Mihailovich collaborated with the Nazis, but he found numerous statements establishing that Hitler feared the Mihailovich movement far more than he feared the Tito movement.

The communists also feared Mihailovich more than they did any other man. And that is why, when they executed him, they disposed of his shattered body in a secret burial place, so that those who followed him and revered him would not be able to come at night to drop tears and flowers on his grave and tenderly offer a few words of prayer in gratitude to General Mihailovich for his heroism and sacrifice.

*But despite all of the abuse and all the precautions of the communists, the truth about Mihailovich – now grown to the proportions of a legend – still persists among the Serbian people. Evidence of this is the remarkable article on Mihailovich which Mihajlo Mihajlov wrote for *The New Leader*, just before Tito's courts sentenced him to seven years of hard labor in early March of this year.*

I think that it is fitting that we in the free world who are aware of the truth should also do everything in our power to set the record straight and to bring about the ultimate vindication before the bar of history – of one of the noblest figures of World War II.

Draza Mihailovich, in addition to being an outstanding soldier and a great national leader, was a man who stood for everything that we in America believe in. He was a true believer in the rights enshrined in our own Declaration of Independence – the right to think and speak and pray in accordance with one's own religious, political, economic and social beliefs, without government restraint or repression.

...the United States Congress should accede to the petition of the American airmen that they be authorized to erect in Washington with publicly subscribed funds, a monument which they would dedicate, in gratitude, to "General Draza Mihailovich, Savior of American Airmen."

Beyond this, there is still a larger debt which the free world owes to the memory of General Draza Mihailovich. It is my hope that this debt will some day be repaid in full through the liberation of his people from communist tyranny."

-Senator Frank J. Lausche, March 27, 1975

9. A Thanksgiving Tribute to the Americans from the General. An American Officer Remembers...

"As we proceeded out over the Adriatic my mind flashed back to one incident which will always have great meaning for me. Before I was leaving for my tour of Serbia, the Minister [General Mihailovich] had expressed a desire to do something to honor

America saying “Here we have Slava, the day of our patron saint. What is America’s slava?”

I thought for a moment and said, ‘We have four great days, Christmas, New Year, Independence Day and Thanksgiving. Christmas we love because it is the day of Christ. New Years we enjoy because we look with hope to it, but on its Eve we celebrate, sometimes not too wisely but too well, and often the day itself finds us with aching heads. Independence day would be wonderful except for the sadness of sacrifice and mourning that sweeps the South from the cause of our Civil War. Thanksgiving is our day, our Slava, because that day we give Thanks to God for our founding Fathers and the beginning of our country and freedom.’

Mihailovich replied, ‘Good, we would honor America and on the Eve of that day each mountaintop of Serbia will have a fire lighted by our peasants.’

On Thanksgiving Eve, three Americans standing in a tiny village high in the Serbian mountains, saw a huge fiery “A” come into being. Then another, and one after the other fires appeared until eleven peaks were outlined.

This I remember. A magnificent tribute to America from a truly great man.”

Colonel Albert B. Seitz, American Liaison Officer with General Mihailovich

10. *“The United States must insist on a fair and open trial for General Mihailovich, anti-Red Chetnik hero, now in the hands of the Communist regime of Marshal Tito in Yugoslavia if our future allies are to have any confidence in our pledged word as a nation.*

There is no real question about the fact that General Mihailovich took up arms against the German invaders of his country in April, 1941, at a time when Soviet Russia was an ally of National Socialist Germany.

At that time the present dictator of Yugoslavia, Marshal Josip Broz, called Tito, was an expatriate, studying in Moscow as a faithful adherent of the Third International – the Comintern – which had adopted the alliance with Hitler’s Germany as an internal program of aggression for mutual benefit. For two and one half years, during the darkest days of the struggle against Germany, Italy and Japan, Mihailovich, former minister of war in Yugoslavia, fought on our side.

No question was raised as to his loyalty or valor while there was real doubt about the outcome of the war. Only after our victory was seen as to be certain did other elements in Yugoslavia flock to the well-equipped and well-provisioned ranks of Tito, who then began to receive from the United States and Britain all that had been promised – but not delivered – to Mihailovich.

This request has been categorically refused by Tito, whose supporters in the Kremlin now openly demand that all Tito's claims be ratified without argument.

From every point of view of American law, customs and instinct, these proposals go against the grain. They contravene our basic conception of fair play, honest dealing and of the right of every man accused to be allowed witnesses in his defense."

The Honorable Clare Boothe Luce (R) Connecticut, April 20, 1946

American playwright, editor, journalist, ambassador, and first woman elected to U.S. Congress

11. *"No people in Europe have a more heroic record in this war than the Serbs. Among them, no hero is more glorious than General Draza Mihailovic."*

– Watson Kirkconnell

12. *Where are the thunderers who once could speak
The Language of the Prophets, when the weak
Were broken and the good oppressed? Where are those
Whose words were cleansing fire, till there arose
the phoenix-armies from the martyrs' dust
To make the word the deed, oppose the lust
Of tyrants and proclaim the prophets true?
Where is the gratitude our fathers knew
And sanctuary and penance for wrong power?
Did Milton fail the martyrs, Gladstone cower
Before the ruthless? Was the public pen
careful of epithet? And public men —
Were they afraid to say: "Alas we erred
And now confess our error. Let the word
Go out, perhaps to save a soul and save
Our souls"? Today the coward and the knave*

*Are kings. These are mean times. If it be doom,
Our tongues, at least, are free and there is room
For utterance that salves us if not saves.
Why should we ape the silence of graves?
And even these have epitaphs as tongues.
Since power is dumb before the powerful wrongs
Let one small voice salute the Serbian.
With shame at first, then prayer for that brave man.
"I.M. Draza Mihailovich (Murdered July 16, 1946)
by L. Aaronson, British Poet, July 1946*

Revisiting the win-win-win-win outcome in Syria

October 23, 2019

In his recent article “[The Road to Damascus: How the Syria War Was Won](#)” Pepe Escobar summarized the outcome of the war in Syria in the following way:

“It’s a quadruple win. The U.S. performs a face saving withdrawal, which Trump can sell as avoiding a conflict with NATO ally Turkey. Turkey has the guarantee – by the Russians – that the Syrian Army will be in control of the Turkish-Syrian border. Russia prevents a war escalation and keeps the Russia-Iran-Turkey peace process alive. And Syria will eventually regain control of the entire northeast.”

This otherwise excellent summary overlooks two out of three members of the “Axis of Kindness”, - Israel and the KSA. Of course, later in his analysis Pepe does address these actors, and also includes Kuwait. Furthermore, a thorough discussion of what took place would have to also include China, Hezbollah, Yemen and the EU (well, the ones that matter, the UK and France. The rest are just voiceless colonies of the USA).

Most of the analyses of what just took place focused on the “what”. I will try to look into the “*why*” and the “*how*” of what just happened in Syria. Still, I don’t propose to make such a detailed analysis, but I do want to re-classify the actors in a somewhat different way: by their relative strength.

| Actor | Theoretical Strength |
|--|---|
| The “Axis of Kindness”: United States+CENTCOM+NATO+Israel+KSA | by far the most powerful actor almost by any measure: a bigger military force than all the other actors combined (at least when looked at regionally), huge economic power (the dollar is still THE #1 currency on the planet), total control of the region (via CENTCOM) and quasi unconditional support from Europe (via NATO). Finally, Israel does pack a powerful military punch. This actor has only ONE weakness, but more about that later. |
| Iran+Hezbollah+Houthi+Shia forces in Iraq | in regional terms, Iran is the local superpower which can even successfully defy the Axis of Kindness forces (and has done so since the Islamic Revolution of 1979). |

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| <p>Russia+Syria</p> | <p>I placed Russia and Syria in the same group and I could have added Iran, but since I believe that Russia objectively has more power over the Syrian government than Iran, I think that it is important to put Russia and Syria together simply because Damascus cannot say “no” to Moscow, but could do so, at least in theory, to Tehran. Finally, Russia and Iran agree on the main issues, but have different visions for the future of the Middle-East. Thus this is another reason to look at them separately, even if not necessarily in opposition to each other. In military terms, Russia is very strong, then very vulnerable, then very strong again, it all depends on your level of analysis (see below)</p> |
| <p>Turkey+pro-Turkish factions in Syria</p> | <p>That one is a difficult one to classify. On one hand, Turkey does not have any regional allies (the Ottoman Empire left only hatred and deep resentment in its former colonies). For a while, the pro-Turkish factions, which were liberally showered with weapons, money, training, logistical support, etc, by the US and the KSA, but eventually these factions grew weaker and weaker until they reached a state of advanced impotence leaving Turkey pretty much alone (we will also look into that below).</p> |
| <p>The Kurds</p> | <p>For a while, they sure looked potentially powerful: not only did the Kurds have a pretty big military power (albeit mostly one restricted to infantry), they had the support of Axis of Kindness and, especially, Israel which saw any form of Independent Kurdistan as a great tool to weaken and even threaten Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria. Furthermore, the Kurds happened to control a lot of oil rich regions and they could always retreat in the mountainous areas if needed.</p> |
| <p>The Takfiris (i.e. the many and constantly name-changing franchises of what used to be called</p> | <p>In reality, the Takfiris really ought to be classified together with the Axis of Kindness since they have been the foot-soldiers/cannon-</p> |

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| “al-Qaeda”). | fodder for the AngloZionist since the 1980s (from Afghanistan then to modern day Syria). Nonetheless, we will consider them as distinct from the rest of the Axis of Kindness forces. |
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Of course, and just like any other taxonomy, this one is necessarily somewhat subjective and others might use different criteria or categories. Now let’s look at ***what I believe is the key to the control of the entire region: the ability to place “boots on the ground”*** or the lack of such an ability:

| Actor | Ability to place boots on the ground |
|---|--|
| <p>The “Axis of Kindness”:</p> <p>United States+CENTCOM+NATO+Israel+KSA</p> | <p>This is The One Big Weakness of the Axis of Kindness members: while they have huge armed forces, and even nuclear weapons, while they can deploy numerically very large forces, while they can (arguably) achieve air and naval supremacy/superiority pretty much anywhere in the region, <i>they cannot follow up any of these options with a credible ground force.</i></p> <p>While this is always carefully obfuscated by the legacy AngloZionist propaganda, the US, Israeli and KSA ground forces are only capable of murdering civilians or primitive resistance forces <i>en masse</i>. But as soon as any of these militaries meets a halfway decent enemy force which is willing to fight on the ground, they are defeated (name me ONE meaningful victory of these Axis of Kindness forces in the last couple of decades or more!).</p> |
| <p>Iran+Hezbollah+Houthi+Shia forces in Iraq</p> | <p>The Iranians and their local allies (calling them “proxies” completely misses the real nature of the relationship between Iran and these regional forces!) are <i>all capable of deploying very capable ground forces.</i> In fact, they have all done so with tremendous success (especially Hezbollah). What Iran provides to this informal alliance is the capability to augment it with new, high-tech and modern weapons, including anti-shiping missiles, air defenses, ATGMs, communications, drones, etc. <i>In terms of ground forces, this alliance is the #1</i></p> |

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| | <i>power in the region.</i> |
| Russia+Syria | Both Russia and Syria have very competent and well-balanced forces deployed in Syria. However, truth be told, I believe that Hezbollah+Iran currently have even more military weight, at least in terms of ground forces in Syria. The thing to keep in mind is this: if only Russian forces existed inside Syria (Tartus, Khmeimin, plus assorted special units all over Syria) then Russia is definitely weaker than the Axis of Kindness. But if we assume that Russian forces outside Syria could (and probably would!) intervene to defend the Russian forces inside Syria, then we would have to flip much of this equation around and categorize Russia as even more powerful than the Axis of Kindness (I will explain in more detail why and how below). |
| Turkey+pro-Turkish factions in Syria | There can be no doubt that at the initiation of the international aggression against Syria, Turkey had a credible and powerful military. Then something went very wrong and with each new development (starting with the coup attempt against Erdogan) Turkey only got weaker and weaker. The country which dared to shoot down a Russian Su-24 eventually found itself in the humiliating position to have to ask for Russian help not once, but over and over again. The latest Turkish invasion of northern Syria has proven that, while the Turks can still beat the Kurds, that's about all they can do, and even that not very well. |
| The Kurds | Frankly, I never believed in the chances of the Kurds for anything even remotely resembling an independent Kurdistan. Oh sure, my sympathies were often with the Kurds (at least in their struggle against Turkey), but I always knew that the notion of imposing some new (and very artificial) state against the will of ALL the regional powers was both naive and self- |

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| | defeating. The truth is that the US and Israel simply *used* the Kurds if and when needed, and ditched them as soon as it became obvious that the Kurds outlived their utility. The best the Kurds will ever get is a regional autonomy in Iran, Iraq and Syria. Anything else is a dangerous pipe dream. |
| The Takfiris (i.e. the many and constantly name-changing franchises of what used to be called “al-Qaeda”). | Just like the Turks, the various Takfiris appeared as a formidable force when the aggression against Syria was initiated. And if the the US GWOT appeared to be a true blessing for the “good terrorists” (that’s, of course, all the terrorists in this region) it is because it was. Then something went very very wrong, and now they look as weak and clueless as the Kurds. |

Now let’s sum this up. This is how the relative strength of these regional actors has *changed* since the initiation of the AngloZionist aggression against Syria:

| Actor | Evolution of strength of each regional power |
|---|--|
| The “Axis of Kindness”: | |
| United States+CENTCOM+NATO+Israel+KSA | DOWN: from strongest to one of the weakest in the region |
| Iran+Hezbollah+Houthi+ Shia forces in Iraq | UP: arguably the most balanced military force in the region |
| Russia+Syria | UP: in a process which only *looked* like sheer “good luck” Russia and Syria grew stronger and stronger with each passing year. |
| Turkey+pro-Turkish factions in Syria | DOWN: in sharp contrast to Russia, a weird process of what *looked* like sheer “bad luck” Turkey and its allies in Syria just seemed to get weaker and weaker with each passing year. |
| The Kurds | DOWN: the Kurds made the immense mistake of believing all the empty promises (often called “plan B”, “plan C”, “plan D”, etc.) made by the AngloZionists. Now all their dreams are over |

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| | and they will have to settle for autonomy inside Iraq and Syria. |
| The Takfiris (i.e. the many and constantly name-changing franchises of what used to be called “al-Qaeda”). | DOWN: their situation is almost as bad as the one of the Kurds. Their sole advantage is that they are not linked to any one piece of land and that they can try to regroup somewhere else in the region (or even the world); never say never again, but it looks to me like this will not happen in the foreseeable future. |

It is now time to try to make sense of all this and try answer the question of why one group of relatively strong actors had so much bad luck as to become weaker and weaker, while the weaker became stronger and stronger.

The first thing we need to agree upon is that irrespective of the public posturing, ***everybody is, and has been, talking to everybody else.*** This “conversation” could be official and public, or behind closed doors, or even by means of intermediaries and, last but not least, a state version of “body language”: by means of actions which send a message to the other party or parties. Still, while this is certainly true, ***it is the quality of the communications between the various parties which made all the difference.*** When, say, Netanyahu or Trump publicly proclaim they they don’t give a damn about anything at all (including international law) and that they reserve the right to threaten or even attack anybody, at any time, for any reason whatsoever, this is a very clear message to, say, the Iranians. But what is that message, really? It says a couple of things:

1. Resistance is futile because we are so much stronger than you and therefore
2. We don’t give a damn about you or your national interests and therefore
3. We are not interested in negotiating with you (or anybody else for that matter). Your only solution is to submit to us

This is really crucial. The USA and Israel have proclaimed their total superiority over the entire planet and, specifically, over every single actor in the Middle-East. Furthermore, their entire worldview and ideology is predicated on this very strong sense of military superiority. Ask any Israeli or US American what their countries will do if some coalition of local powers is successful in attacking them: they will reply something along the lines of “we will simply nuke all the friggin’ ragheads and sand-niggers – f**k them!”. This line is always delivered with a tone of absolute finality, a total certitude and the mental equivalent of “nuff said!”.

Alas, for the Axis of Kindness, this is a completely counter-factual belief. Why?

First, the quick appeal to nukes is an implicit admission that there is something very wrong with the rest of the armed forces of the Axis of Kindness. Furthermore, the real regional powers all understand that it is not in their interest to give the US or Israel a pretext to use nukes. Thus, while, say, the Iranians sure have the means to strike Israel or any one of the many CENTCOM facilities in the Middle-East, they have been very careful to keep their counter-attacks below the dangerous threshold in which the legacy AngloZionist corporate media would be unable to conceal the magnitude of the disaster and demand that nukes be used (yes, if it comes to that, both the Israeli and the US media will demand nuclear strikes just as they cheered for every war of aggression ever committed by the USA and Israel).

Second, precisely because the US and Israel are unable to have real allies (they only have colonies run by *comprador* elites), they cannot operate successfully in a multi-lateral kind of relationship with other actors. The contrast between the US/Israel, on one hand, and Russia and Iran, on the other, could not be greater. Both Russia and Iran understand that having real allies is much more advantageous than having puppets. Why? Because in order to convince somebody to become your ally you absolutely have to offer that party something tangible as part of a compromise goal setting. When this is done, the weaker ally feels that it is defending its own interests and not the interests of a patron which might be unreliable or which might even backstab you.

Third, one of the best US experts on the theory of negotiations, Professor William Zartman, wrote in his seminal book ["The Practical Negotiator"](#) that

One of the eternal paradoxes of negotiations is that it allows the weak to confront the strong and still come away with something which should not be possible if weakness and strength were all that mattered (...). Weaker parties tend to seek more formal negotiating forums and to strengthen their hand through organizations (...). Weak states can afford erratic or irresponsible behavior more easily than stronger parties, particularly when the rules of regularity and responsibility favor the strong (...). Weak states do best by rewarding stronger states' concessions rather than by "hanging tough" and by opening high to indicate needs and to facilitate rewards (...). The tactics of toughness and softness vary according to the strength of the parties: under symmetry, toughness tends to lead to toughness and under

asymmetry to softness, with weaker parties following the leader of stronger parties.

There is a lot to unpack here (and there is much more in this book which I highly recommend to everybody!).

First, let's compare and contrast the Russia and US approaches to creating negotiation fora. The US cooked up the "[Friends of Syria](#)" forum which was most remarkable in two unique ways: first, in spite of calling itself "Friends of Syria" this group only contained a who's who of Syria's, Iran's and Russia's enemies (just like to "[Friends of Libya](#)" was a cornucopia of countries hostile to Libya). Secondly, the self-evident (and not really denied) purpose and function of this group was to bypass the UNSC. There is nothing new here, the US has been trying to replace the UN and its role in upholding international law with all sorts of gimmicks including "coalition of the willing" or appeals for a "rules-based international order". Needless to say, with the possible exception of a few truly dim propagandists, all these tricks are designed to avoid the already existing international fora, beginning with the United Nations. Russia, in contrast, not only used the UN for all its (admitted limited) worth and succeeded in forcing the USA to accept resolutions on Syria (or the Ukraine for that matter) which the US did not want to agree to, but which they could not veto on political considerations. Not only that, Russia also created the [Astana peace process](#) which, unlike the US created fantasies, brought together different parties including parties hostile to each other. The most brilliant move of the Russians was to impose on all parties the notion that "*those willing to negotiate are legitimate parties whose interests must be considered while those who refused to sit down are all terrorists*". Of course, the many al-Qaeda franchises tried to play the "rebranding game", but this did not help: you can change names once every 24 hours if you want, but if you ain't sitting down at the negotiating table you are a terrorist and, therefore, a legitimate target for Russian/Iranian/Syrian attacks. Once the Empire had to accept these terms, backed by a UNSC resolution, it became locked-in in a process which they could only stop by means of a military victory.

And here we come back to the boots on the ground issue. For all its combined military power, the Axis of Kindness does not have a ground force it can put on the ground. Whereas the Syrians, Hezbollah, Iran and Russia very neatly and most effectively (even if informally) agreed to the following assignment of tasks:

1. The Syrians will let the Russians reorganize their armed forces, especially a few elite units, and slowly, step-by-step liberate their lands.
2. The Iranians and Hezbollah will act like a fire-brigade and will directly support the Syrian operations with their own forces in crucial sectors of the line of contact.
3. The Russians will take control of the Syrian airspace and provide the Syrians, Iran and Hezbollah protection from AngloZionist missile and bomb strikes. Finally, Russian special operation forces will be engaged in high priority operations which are beyond Iranian or Hezbollah capabilities.

What was the biggest obstacle to the Syrian-Iranian-Hezbollah-Russian plans?

Turkey, of course. The Turks have always hated Assad (father and son) and their Neo-Ottoman delusions still give them a, shall we say, “special desire” to intervene beyond their own borders. Furthermore, Turkey also very much saw Syria as a contributing factor to their “Kurdish problem”. Finally, Turkey did have the kind of military which made it possible for it to threaten intervention or even intervene in Iraq and Syria (obviously not against Iran). Thus, what Russia needed to do was take Turkey out of the equation or, at least, weaken Turkey as much as possible. And that is exactly what Russia did.

For the Kremlin the shooting down of the Su-24 was tantamount to a declaration of war. Except that the Russians, quite aware of their relative weakness if compared to the US+NATO+CENTCOM+Turkey, wisely decided not to retaliate in kind and, say, strike Turkish military facilities. But Putin did promise “*you won't get away with just not selling us tomatoes*” (Russia imposed an embargo on a number of Turkish export goods). Besides a number of political and economic sanctions, you can be sure that the Russians decided to use all their methods and means to weaken and destabilize both Erdogan personally and Turkey as a whole. Then, here is what happened:

- On November 24th, 2015, Turkey shot down a Russian Su-24
- In the next days, Russia closed down the north Syrian airspace, severed all contacts with the Turkish military, promised to shoot down any other Turkish aircraft attacking any target in Syria (regardless from what airspace) and imposed political and economic sanctions.
- In December Putin ominously declared “Если кто-то думает, что, совершив подлое военное преступление: убийство наших людей — они отделаются

помидорами, или какими-то ограничениями в строительной и других отраслях, то они глубоко заблуждаются” (“if somebody thinks that by committing a vile war crime they will get away with tomatoes or some type of restrictions in the construction and other industries, they are profoundly mistaken“).

- In June 2016, Erdogan sent a letter to Russian President Vladimir Putin expressing sympathy and ‘deep condolences’.
- On 15 July 2016, a *coup d’état* was attempted against Erdogan and almost cost him his life. By all accounts, Russia played some kind of behind-the-scenes role and saved Erdogan’s life and power.
- Following the failed coup, Turkey embarked on a major re-alignment and cast its lot with Russia and Iran, even if that meant having to accept Assad in power in Syria.

What exactly Russia did behind the scenes (versions range from warning Erdogan to actually using Russian special forces to evacuate him *in extremis*) will probably remain a secret for many years, but neither does it really matter. All we know for sure, is that after the coup, Erdogan made a 180 and completely changed his tune. My personal belief is that the Russians used their covert means to entice the US and its [Gulenist CIA puppets](#) to try to overthrow Erdogan only to then foil their coup attempt. I find the two other main options (the US is fantastically stupid and incompetent and Russia is an amazingly lucky country) much harder to believe. But even if we accept these options, or some combination thereof, Russia still superbly played her cards (by, for example, using the pretext of Turkey’s downing the Su-24 to strongly beef up Russian air defense capabilities in Syria) and Turkey was removed as a “powerful hostile actor” from the Russian equation of the Middle-East.

After that, what was left was only a kind of “political and military mopping-op operation.

Russia repeatedly tried to make the Kurds realize that their strategy of fighting every single neighbor they had was a non-starter which will inevitably backfire. Alas for the Kurdish people, their leaders were either too delusional, or too corrupt, to understand this. In the meantime, Erdogan and the rest of the Turkish political establishment were adamant they Turkey would under no circumstances allow the Syrian (or Iraqi) Kurds to ever establish their own state.

[Sidebar: I really feel sad for the Kurds, but I also have to say that they really did it to themselves. This ought to be systematically studied, but their appears to be two kinds of small nations: those who are smart enough to play one big neighbor against the other while collaborating with both (say Kazakhstan or Mongolia) and then there are those who have no sense of history at all and who end up repeating the same mistakes over and over again like, say, the Poles or the Kurds. These nations always have a bloated sense of self-worth which leads them to act as if they were the big guys on the block and every time all they achieve is alienating all their truly big neighbors. Apparently, irrespective of the number of times these folks were smacked down by others in history, their narcissistic self-aggrandizement and, frankly, arrogance, gets them invaded, then invaded again and then invaded some more. You could say that they are born losers or that they “failed to learn the lessons of history”. Same difference, really]

For the Kremlin, the solution was obvious: use the Turks to force the Kurds to accept the inevitable but don't let the Turks establish a permanent invasion force in northern Syria.

True, the Russians have voiced their rather flaccid disapproval of the Turkish operation and they called everybody to come back to the negotiation table. This is one rather rare example in which Russia's rhetoric did not match her actions because in reality the Turkish operation would have been absolutely impossible if the Russians had not given Ankara an unofficial, but very trustworthy, go ahead beforehand. Furthermore, according to at least one report (which I find reasonably credible) the Russian Aerospace Forces even scrambled a pair of Su-35S to engage a Turkish pair of F-16's which, as soon as they saw what was about to happen, decided to make a run for their lives. Yet, in other instances, we know for a fact that F-16's were used against Kurdish targets. It is pretty clear that the Russians not only told Erdogan what was acceptable and what was not, they also “fine tuned” the Turkish operation just so it would force the Kurds to negotiate while not making it possible for the Turks to establish any kind of meaningful presence in northern Syria.

What happened next was a domino effect. The Kurds tried to fight as best they could, but everybody realized that they were doomed. The US Americans, very predictably and, I would argue, very logically, also ran for their lives. Trump used this (totally true, but nevertheless pretext) to get out of Syria (at least officially) not only to

protect US lives, but to also get out of the political quicksand which Syria has become for the Axis of Kindness.

Last but not least, the Israelis were absolutely livid, and for good reason: there is no doubt that they are the biggest losers in this entire process and they now find themselves in the situation of depending on a pretend superpower which cannot deliver anything of value (except loads of dollars which the Israelis spend on a lot of useless hardware). The recent events in the region have not only shown that US ground forces plainly suck, they have also shown that US guarantees are worthless while US weapons systems are vastly over-rated.

Here we come to what I believe is the single most important development of this conflict: ALL the many Israeli plans for the region collapsed one after the other. Most pathetically, all the trips Netanyahu made to Russia to try to con the Russians into taking Israel seriously have failed. Why? Because the Russians have long understood that Israel is a paper tiger with impressive “roar” (aka the massive international Zionist propaganda machine known as the “western free media” among infants and dull people) but who is unable to follow up its loud roaring with anything more tangible. Yes, I know, the worse things go for the Israelis, the bigger their boastful propaganda becomes: after having promised that the “invincible IDF” conducted “hundreds” of strikes in Syria and Iraq they now make noises about having a “killing list” which includes Hassan Nasrallah. Right. As for their “hundreds” of airstrikes, they must be the most inept and poorly executed air campaign since the total failure of NATO’s air campaign in Kosovo. Ask yourself this basic question:

If the Israelis have been conducting “hundreds” of airstrikes in Syria – why have they not resulted in any tangible effects on the military situation on the ground?

After all, when the Russians intervened, they changed the course of the entire war. In fact, the (very small) Russian Aerospace task force in Syria reversed the course of that war.

Why did the Russian air campaign yield such truly phenomenal results and why did the Israel air campaign yield absolutely nothing (except some much needed psychotherapy for the many Zionists who suffer from what Gilad Atzmon brilliantly referred to as “pre-traumatic stress disorder”)?

The answer is simple: one was a real military campaign while the other was just “feel good” PR.

A very good example of Zartman’s thesis that “*Weak states can afford erratic or irresponsible behavior more easily than stronger parties, particularly when the rules of regularity and responsibility favor the strong*” can be found in the relative position of, on one hand, Iran, Hezbollah and the Houthis and, on the other, the US and Israel. Not that Iran or its allies have acted irresponsibly, they have not, but when they reacted, it was always with a double message: we don’t want war, but we are ready for it. But when the US engages in rather crude threats (just think of all the silly threats Trump has made during his presidency, including the most recent ones to wage war on Turkey if needed, not a joke, check [here](#)), these threats always end up further weakening the USA. It is a true blessing for Russia, Iran, Hezbollah and the Syrians that their enemies are not only so inept, but also so good at cornering themselves in the worst kind of situations. In the end, the US still managed to lose face, even if you were never told about it. What do I mean?

Just look at what just took place: Trump sent Erdogan such a crude and rude letter (he sounds like a 10 year old), which was so insulting to Erdogan that he not only tossed it in the trash bin, but he also made sure to tell his aides to “leak” to the media how Erdogan treated Trump’s silly threats and insults. Turkey also launched a full-scale invasion and clearly challenged the USA to do something about it. At this point, the two other “geniuses” in the White House (Pompeo and VP Pence) had to scramble to Ankara in what was clearly a desperate “damage control” mission, beg for a meeting, and then beg the Turks to agree to an entirely symbolic ceasefire which gave just enough time for the Kurds to agree to all the Syrian terms and to let the Syrian army take control of huge swaths of land without firing a single shot. Now here is the beauty of it all:

Pompeo and Pence demanded that Erdogan agree exactly to the kind of balanced outcome the Russians have been advocating all along! I am amazed that the Dem-media has not accused Pompeo and Pence of being Russian agents because what they just “demanded” and “obtained” from Turkey is exactly what Putin wanted :-)

Of course, this was all wrapped in all sorts of threats and promises to wipe out this or that country ([including Turkey](#), a NATO member state which could, in theory, invoke Art 5 and ask NATO to defend it against the USA! Of course, this would not happen as this would mark the end of NATO) and all the rest of the obligatory barking

we always hear from the US when the “best military in world history” fails to achieve anything at all (even if Trump seriously claims that the US – not Russia – defeated the Takfiris the West has so lovingly been federating, supporting, I strongly believe, directing them for decades). Yes, Trump did the right thing when he declared that he wanted the US forces out of Syria, but let’s not be naive about that either: he did not order that because he is some great humanitarian, but because if the Turks, the Kurds, the Syrians or anybody else had taken a hard shot at the US forces in the region, this would have resulted in a bigger war which would certainly cost Trump his presidency.

Which brings us to the Russian task force in Syria. As I said, it is strong, then weak and then strong again. It all depends on your assumptions:

If we look just at the Russian task force in Khmeimim and Tartus, we see that it is protected by cutting edge Russian weapons systems including S-400s, Su-34s, Su-35S, EW stations, battle management stations, etc. This is more than enough to beat back a pretty powerful missile and/or bombing strike. In this case we can think of the Russian task force in Syria as very powerful and capable of dealing with many types of attack.

On the next level, however, it becomes obvious that the biggest weakness of the Russian task force in Syria has been, from day 1, its very small size. Irrespective of its sophistication, the Russian air defenses can be over-run by a determined attack by any combination of Axis of Kindness forces simply because at the end of the day, air defenses are always a part of a numbers game. Even in the best of cases, one Russian air defense missile can only engage one attacking missile or aircraft. For an attack to be successful, all the Axis of Kindness forces need to do is calculate how many missiles the Russians have, then shoot about 1.5x that number of (rather antiquated) Tomahawks, and once the Russians use up their stores, follow up with a second wave of missiles, this time modern and difficult to target ones. At this point the Russians would have to reply with only their AA artillery and their EW capabilities. Inevitably, there will come a point when they will be overwhelmed. In this scenario, Russia is the weaker party and the Russian task force is doomed in case of a sustained US/NATO/CENTCOM attack.

Finally, there is a third level which the AngloZionists have to consider: the Russians have made it pretty clear that in case of an attack on the Russian task force in Syria, Russia will use her strategic striking capabilities to protect her task force. Such measures could include: long range cruise missile attack and air strikes (possibly

coming from the Iranian airspace). In this case, as my friend Andrey Martyanov explained many times, including in his article "[Russia's Stand-Off Capability: the 800 Pound Gorilla in Syria](#)" which he concluded with the following words:

"This simple, single operational fact shows precisely why for two years a relatively small Russian military contingent has been able to operate so effectively in Syria and, in fact, dictate conditions on the ground and in the area of its operations. The answer is simple—many adrenaline junkies are lowered in a cage into the water to face sharks, with only metal rods separating them and sharks' deadly jaws. Yet, up there, in the boat one can always put a man with a gun which can be used in case of emergency to a deadly effect should the cage give. The Russian military contingent in Syria is not just some military base—it is the force tightly integrated with Russian Armed Forces that have enough reach and capability to make anyone face some extremely unpleasant choices, including the fact that it is Russia, not the US, who controls escalation to a threshold and that can explain a non-stop anti-Russian hysteria in US media since the outcome of the war in Syria became clear"

Here, again, we have the same stance as Iran's: we don't want war, but we are ready for it. One could say that the US stance is the polar opposite: we do want war (heck, we *need* it for political and economic reasons!), but we are completely unprepared for it (including psychologically).

Conclusion: remember all those who are now proven wrong!

Remember all the folks who predicted with absolute confidence that Russia was "selling out" Syria? They began their tune when Russia prevented a US attack on Syria by catching the US at its word and offering to remove all chemical weapons from Syria. Not only were these weapons useless, they were a perfect pretext for the Axis of Kindness to strike Syria. The US was livid, but had to accept. Well, all the "Putin/Russia is/are selling out" Syria immediately claimed that Russia was disarming Syria to make it easier for Israel to attack.

Yet, in reality, no (meaningful) Israeli attack ever materialized.

Then the same folks claimed that Russia "allowed" Israel to strike Syria, that the Russians turned off their S-300s/S-400s, etc, etc, etc.

Yet, in reality, the US pretty much gave up, while the Israelis claimed “hundreds” of sorties. Maybe they even did hit a few empty and therefore unprotected buildings, who knows?

Then there was the massive choir of trolls declaring that Russia would partition Syria. Yet, for all the convincing sounding arguments (at least to those who did not understand Russia or the Middle-East), one by one the various “good terrorists” strongholds fell to the Syrian military. Now more Syrian land has been liberated than ever before. As for the Turks, they can dream on about a bigger Turkey or about creating some kind of security/buffer zone, but they understand that they cannot do that if Russia and Syria both oppose this. In fact, Turkey has officially promised to respect the territorial integrity of Syria (see [here](#), in Russian)

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| <p style="text-align: center;">МЕМОРАНДУМ О ВЗАИМОПОНИМАНИИ МЕЖДУ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИЕЙ И ТУРЕЦКОЙ РЕСПУБЛИКОЙ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Сочи, 22 октября 2019 года)</p> <p>Президент Российской Федерации В.В.Путин и Президент Турецкой Республики Р.Т.Эрдоган согласились со следующим.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Обе стороны подтверждают свою приверженность сохранению политического единства и территориальной целостности Сирии, а также обеспечению национальной безопасности Турции. 2. Они подчеркивают свою решимость бороться с терроризмом во всех его формах и проявлениях и противостоять сепаратистским устремлениям на сирийской территории. 3. В этом контексте существующий статус-кво в нынешнем районе операции «Источник мира» между Тель-Абьядом и Рас Аль-Айном глубиной до 32 км будет сохранен. 4. Обе стороны подтверждают важное значение Аданского соглашения. Российская Федерация будет содействовать осуществлению Аданского соглашения в современных условиях. 5. Начиная с 12.00 23 октября 2019 года на сирийскую сторону сирийско-турецкой границы за пределами зоны операции «Источник мира» вводятся подразделения российской военной полиции и сирийской пограничной службы. Они будут содействовать выводу подразделений КОС и их вооружения на 30 км от сирийско-турецкой границы, который должен завершиться в течение 150 часов после 12.00 23 октября 2019 г. С этого момента начнется совместное российско-турецкое патрулирование на глубину до 10 км от границы к западу и к востоку от района операции «Источник мира», кроме города Камышлы. 6. Все подразделения КОС и их вооружения будут выведены из Мэнбиджа и Таль-Рифата. 7. Обе стороны примут необходимые меры для предотвращения инфильтрации террористических элементов. 8. Будут предприняты совместные усилия для содействия безопасному и добровольному возвращению беженцев. 9. Будет создан совместный механизм мониторинга и верификации для обмена и координации осуществления данного Меморандума. 10. Обе стороны продолжат работать над поиском политического решения сирийского конфликта в рамках «механизма Астаны» и будут поддерживать деятельность Конституционного комитета. | <p>Memorandum of Understanding Between Turkey and the Russian Federation</p> <p>http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/5452</p> <p>October 22, 2019 (emphasis added by me, VS)</p> <p>President of the Republic of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and President of The Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin agreed on the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The two sides reiterate their commitment to the preservation of the political unity and territorial integrity of Syria and the protection of national security of Turkey. 2. They emphasize their determination to combat terrorism in all forms and manifestations and to disrupt separatist agendas in the Syrian territory. 3. In this framework, the established status quo in the current Operation Peace Spring area covering Tel Abyad and Ras Al Ayn with a depth of 32 km will be preserved. 4. Both sides reaffirm the importance of the Adana Agreement. The Russian Federation will facilitate |
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the implementation of the Adana Agreement in the current circumstances.

5. Starting 12.00 noon of October 23, 2019, ***Russian military police and Syrian border guards will enter the Syrian side of the Turkish-Syrian border, outside the area of Operation Peace Spring, to facilitate the removal of YPG elements and their weapons to the depth of 30 km from the Turkish-Syrian border, which should be finalized in 150 hours. At that moment, joint Russian-Turkish patrols will start in the west and the east of the area of Operation Peace Spring with a depth of 10 km, except Qamishli city.***

6. All YPG elements and their weapons will be removed from Manbij and Tal Rifat.

7. Both sides will take necessary measures to prevent infiltrations of terrorist elements.

8. Joint efforts will be launched to facilitate the return of refugees in a safe and voluntary manner.

9. A joint monitoring and verification mechanism will be established to oversee and coordinate the implementation of this memorandum.

10. ***The two sides will continue to work to find a lasting political solution to the Syrian conflict within Astana Mechanism*** and will support the activity of the Constitutional Committee.

The key elements of this MoU are

1. USA out, Russia in
2. Syria's borders cannot be changed

You can see the full press conference of Putin and Erdogan by clicking [here](#).

Finally, this is the reaction of one of the worst AngloZionist propaganda outlets in Europe:

“Die Kapitulation des Westens” (The Capitulation of the West).

I can't say that I disagree with their conclusion :-)

Finally, does this “capitulation talk” not remind you of something else we have all seen recently?

Yes, of course, the Ucronazi “Hi капітуляції!” (no to the capitulation!).

Again, what does all that talk of “capitulation” strongly suggest?

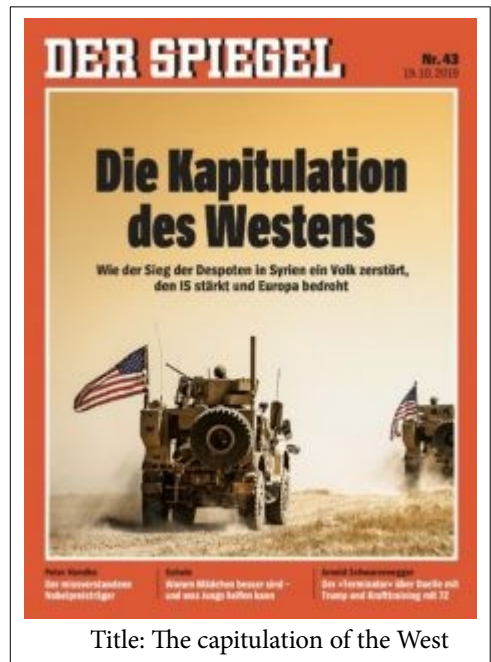
If this is not a triumph of Russian diplomacy then I don't know what this is!

And, just for those who disagree, let me throw in a rhetorical question:

If Putin is such a loser who “sells out” everything and who works with/for Israel and for Netanyahu specifically, if Russia is so weak and clueless, why is it that it is not the Russian people who are denouncing a “capitulation” but, instead, why are all the enemies of Russia freaking out about capitulating?

And now, where do we go from here?

Actually, I am very cautiously optimistic since there is a huge difference between Russia and the USA: the USA needs constant wars simply in order to survive, whereas Russia needs peace to flourish. Now that the Russians are the biggest player in the Middle-East (well, with the Iranians, of course), they will use the fact that they have pretty good relationships with everybody, including (former?) enemies of Russia like the KSA or the UAE.



Title: The capitulation of the West

Of course, there shall be no peace between Israel and the rest of the Middle-East, if only because by its very nature Israel is a mortal threat to every country in the region, even for countries which currently eagerly collaborate with Israel (like the KSA). The only way for the long suffering Middle-East to finally live in peace again would be for the Zionist “*occupation regime over Jerusalem to vanish from the arena of time*” to use the famous, and often mistranslated, words of Ayatollah Khomeini. The current Iranian Supreme leader also clearly spelled out the only manner in which the Palestinian question can be solved and peace will be achieved in the Middle-East:

“The Islamic Republic’s proposal to help resolve the Palestinian issue and heal this old wound is a clear and logical initiative based on political concepts accepted by world public opinion, which has already been presented in detail. We do not suggest launching a classic war by the armies of Muslim countries, or throwing immigrant Jews into the sea, or mediation by the UN and other international organizations. We propose holding a referendum with [the participation of] the Palestinian nation. The Palestinian nation, like any other nation, has the right to determine their own destiny and elect the governing system of the country.”

Both Iranian leaders are absolutely correct. There shall never be peace in the region as long as a crazed racist regime which has only contempt for the rest of the planet continues its slow motion genocide of the indigenous population of Palestine.

In the meantime, now that Syria, Russia, Iran, the Houthis, Hezbollah and the Shia forces in Iraq have successfully shown Uncle Shmuel the door out of Syria, the last Israeli plan (a “plan Z” perhaps) has now collapsed along with any hopes of creating an independent Kurdistan.

Israel is in no condition to take on such a powerful coalition. I would argue that even the US cannot win against this force, even if it still is capable of triggering a bloodbath (just like the Israelis did in 2006).

Of all the strategic collapses we have seen under the Obama and Trump presidencies, the loss of influence in the Middle-East is probably the biggest one of them all. This is a very positive development for the region and for the world. Now let’s just hope that whoever makes it into the White House in 2020 will understand that this is a done deal and will not try to make “the Empire great again” and reverse that course as any such attempts will result in a major regional war.

The Saker

PS: here is a video of the “best military in history” being pelted by stones and veggies by disgusted Kurds while the US forces evacuate in a hurry. Really says it all, doesn't it? Feel the love ;-)



<https://youtu.be/SOSkJEtr9bg>

It also appears that the same sentiment is shared by the Iraqis who are now trying to take legal action to finally also give the boot to Uncle Shmuel, see here: <https://www.rt.com/news/471645-iraq-pleads-un-help-us-troops/>

Again, feel the love, the respect and the (lack) of fear :-)

The Independent Ukraine's painful journey through the five stages of grief

November 14, 2019

In my July 25th article "[Zelenskii's dilemma](#)" I pointed out the fundamental asymmetry of the Ukrainian power configuration following Zelenskii's crushing victory over Poroshenko: while a vast majority of the Ukrainian people clearly voted to stop the war and restore some kind of peace to the Ukraine, the real levers of power in the post-Maidan Banderastan are all held by all sorts of very powerful, if also small, minority groups including:

1. The various "oligarchs" (Kolomoiskii, Akhmetov, etc.) and/or mobsters
2. Arsen Avakov's internal security forces including some "legalized" Nazi death squads
3. The various non-official Nazi deathsquads (Parubii)
4. The various western intelligence agencies who run various groups inside the Ukraine
5. The various western financial/political sponsors who run various groups inside the Ukraine
6. The so-called "Sorosites" (соросята) i.e. Soros and Soros-like sponsored political figures
7. The many folks who want to milk the Ukraine down to the last drop of Ukrainian blood and then run

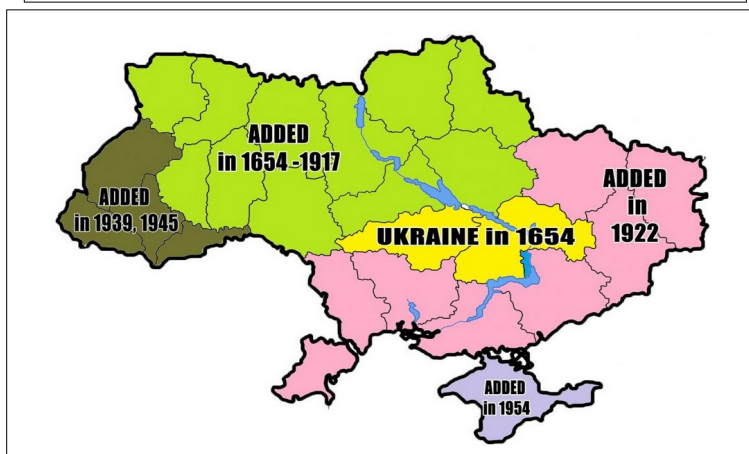
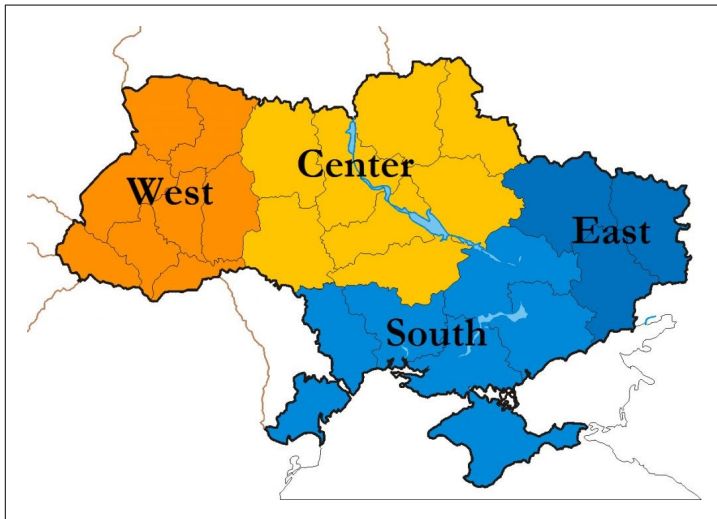
These various groups all acted in unison, at least originally, during and after the Euromaidan. This has now dramatically changed and these groups are now all fighting each other. This is what always happens when things begin to turn south and the remaining loot shrinks with every passing day,

Whether Zelenskii ever had a chance to use the strong mandate he received from the people to take the real power back from these groups or not is now a moot point: It did not happen and the first weeks of Zelenskii's presidency clearly showed that Zelenskii was, indeed, in "[free fall](#)": instead of becoming a "Ukrainian Putin" Zelenskii became a "Ukrainian Trump" – a weak and, frankly, clueless leader, completely outside his normal element, whose only "policy" towards all the various extremist minorities was to try to appease them, then appease them some more, and then even more than

that. As a result, a lot of Ukrainians are already speaking about “Ze” being little more than a “Poroshenko 2.0”. More importantly, pretty much everybody is frustrated and even angry at Zelenskii whose popularity is steadily declining.

Factors beyond “Ze’s” control:

Still, it would be an oversimplification to bring it all down to Zelenskii’s total lack of experience in politics. There are objective factors which make any kind of resolution of the Ukrainian problem very complicated, even for a very strong and principled leader. Here are some of them. 1. The Ukraine is a **completely artificial country** composed of no less than 4 different regions: the western Ukraine (Lvov), the southern Ukraine (Odessa, Nikolaev), the eastern Ukraine (Donbass) and the north-central Ukraine (Kiev). It is important to stress here that these regions **do not** have well-defined borders so one map might show them quite differently from another one. Here are three examples to illustrate this point:





2. The concept of an “independent Ukraine” has always been based on strong ideological founding myths. For example, the expression “independent Ukraine” is a contradiction in terms since in order to be a “ukraine” – that is a frontier/border region, you need to be “the ukraine of something”, of some other entity, like say “Serbian Krajina in Croatia” or the “Siberian Ukraine” in Siberia. These myths include [all the silly stuff we have already heard](#) (the ancient “Ukrs” built the pyramids, spoke proto-Sanskrit, taught Buddha, dug the Black Sea, came from Mars, were mentioned by Herodotus [who himself was Ukrainian] etc. etc. etc.) but also a few absolutely crucial *recent founding myths* including:

- The Euromaidan was a “revolution for dignity” which was supported by the vast majority of the people of the Ukraine. All the shots that day were fired by “Russian agents”.
- The war in the East was started when Russian agents seized official buildings and guns leading to a “covert invasion” (whatever that means) of the Russian armed forces.
- The so-called “LDNR” leaders are Russian FSB agents, mafia thugs and terrorists who oppress the local population which does not support them.
- The Ukrainian armed forces defeated the “Russian hordes” and successfully stopped “Putin” who was planning to invade the entire Ukraine. The Russians still have such plans and are ready to strike.

- The new and improved Ukrainian armed forces are ready to liberate every inch of Ukrainian land.
- The White European Ukraine stands ready to defend Europe against the Russian Asiatic hordes threatening it.
- The “entire world” (no less!!) is united against Russia in support of the Ukraine.
- The Donbass and Crimea will be liberated from the Russian invaders and their local collaborators who will all be carefully interrogated in special filtration camps and all the disloyal elements will be eliminated.

3. Now this set of ideological imperatives makes for a very easy to understand “program” for low-IQ wannabe storm-troopers, but it makes for an insurmountable set of obstacles to the Minsk Agreements or the Steinmeier Formula (which is simply an explication of the terms of the Minsk Agreements). The fact that it was “their” President (Poroshenko) who gave his approval to both of these makes no difference to the nationalists. The main



psychological/ideological problem is that the Minsk Agreements and the Steinmeier Formula both obligate the regime in Kiev to negotiate directly with the leaders of the LDNR. So far, nobody in the powerful minorities mentioned above is ready for such a compromise. Why? Simply because ***IF the government in Kiev finally agrees to talk with the Novorussians then the entire recent ideological basis for the Euromaidan (mentioned above) comes tumbling down.*** IF the LDNR leaders are not Russian agents and terrorists, then they represent the people of Novorussia and if the people of Novorussia have elected these people, then it is the people of Novorussia who want nothing to do with the ugly “Banderastan” which the AngloZionists and the Ukonazis attempted to impose upon the people of the Ukraine in a bloody (and, not to mention, totally illegal) coup.

The Russian narrative is winning

Another major problem for Zelenskii are two competing narratives: the Ukronazi one and, shall we say, the “Russian” one. I have outlined the Ukronazi one just above and now I will mention the competing Russian one which goes something like this:

- *The Euromaidan was a completely illegal violent coup against the democratically elected President of the Ukraine, whose legitimacy nobody contested, least of all the countries which served as mediators between Poroshenko and the rioters and who betrayed their word in less than 24 hours (a kind of a record for western politicians and promises of support!).*
- *All, repeat, ALL the steps taken to sever crucial economic and cultural links between Russia and the Ukraine were decided upon by Ukrainian leaders, never by Russia who only replied symmetrically when needed.*
- *Even with international sanctions directed at her, Russia successfully survived both the severance of ties with the Ukraine and the AngloZionist attempts at hurting the Russian economy. In contrast, severing economic ties with Russia was a death-sentence for the Ukrainian economy which has now become completely deindustrialized.*
- *Now that the Ukraine has been completely deindustrialized, all she can export are either people or land/soil. In the case of people, we are talking primarily about cheap manual labor and prostitutes to the West and engineers and technical specialists towards Russia (especially engineers and scientists of the now defunct, but formerly very powerful, Ukrainian military industrial complex). In terms of land/soil, the party “servant of the people” is now advocating a new law which will do to Ukrainian land/soil what the famous “vouchers” did to the Soviet economy: put it all in the hands of crooks and billionaires.*
- *Crimea is gone and nothing will ever change that, least of all an attempt by Kiev to reconquer Crimea by force (Crimea is currently one of the most defended spots on the planet).*
- *While some western politicians simply cannot make a mea culpa and admit that they completely misread, misunderstood and mismanaged the entire Ukrainian crisis, most folks in the West are already seeing a very*

simple sentence written on their mental walls: the Ukraine is a dangerous failed state with only one thing left to plunder: the Ukrainian soil. In contrast, Europe really needs Russia on all levels, from energy to defense. This is especially true now that Russia and China are embarking on truly gigantic common projects.

- *Russia is now strong enough to take on a combined attack of NATO forces. The LDNR forces are smaller than the Ukrainian military, but much better trained, commanded, equipped and supported and they are most likely to defeat any Ukonazi attack. Still, should a Ukrainian attack be successful and the future of the LDNR be at risk, Russia could stop any such invasion without even deploying ground forces into Novorussia.*

For Zelenskii or, for that matter, for any other Ukrainian leader the above contradictions are unsolvable and every step taken in a direction of pragmatism, no matter how small (and ALL his steps so far have been small), gets an immediate reaction of outrage and threats by the hardcore Nazis of Poroshenko & Co.

Some of the threats made by these Ukonazis are dead serious and the only person who, as of now, kinda can keep the Ukrainian version of the Rwandan “*Interahamwe*” under control would probably be Arsen Avakov, but since he himself is a hardcore Nazi nutcase, his attitude is ambiguous and unpredictable. He probably has more firepower than anybody else, but he was a pure “*Porokhobot*” (Poroshenko-robot) who, in



many ways, controlled Poroshenko more than Poroshenko controlled him. The best move for Zelenskii would be to arrest the whole lot of them overnight (Poroshenko himself, but also Avakov, Parubii, Iarosh, Farion, Liashko, Tiagnibok, etc.) and place a man he totally trusts as Minister of the Interior. Next, Zelenskii should either travel to Donetsk or, at least, meet with the leaders of the LDNR and work with them to implement the Minsk Agreements. That would alienate the Ukonazis for sure, but it would give Zelenskii a lot of popular support.

Needless to say, that is not going to happen. While Zelenskii's puppet master Kolomoiskii would love to stick this entire gang in jail and replace them with his own men, it is an open secret that powerful interest groups in the USA have told Zelenskii "don't you dare touch them". Which is fine, except that this also means "don't you dare change their political course either".

So what might happen next?

The personal future of Poroshenko and his Ucronazis will be decided in the USA. If Trump prevails over the Clinton-Biden gang, then there is a tiny theoretical chance that a joint "go ahead" between the US and Russia could give Zelenskii the go-ahead to begin denazifying the Ukraine. I find this hypothesis most unlikely. Failing that, Russia will embark on a policy of unilateral actions and decisions. What might these be?

To answer that we need to look at Russia's real conditions (as opposed to the official ones). They are pretty straightforward:

1. Crimea is Russian forever
2. Kiev will not be allowed to seize Novorussia by force
3. The Ukraine will never be allowed to join NATO
4. Russia will not pay alone for the reconstruction costs of the Ukraine
5. Russia can live with a unitary, but confederated, Ukraine
6. Russia can also live with whatever is left following a breakup of the Ukraine
7. Unless a viable solution is found, and in a reasonable time frame, Russia can, and will, recognize the LDNR and even allow it to re-join Russia (under what kind of status legally is yet to be determined as there are several possible options here)

The first obvious key question here is this: can the AngloZionist Empire do anything to prevent the Russians from achieving their goals as outlined above?

My personal answer is no, the Empire does not have the means to impose something different from what Russia wants, at least not in the Ukraine. This is not only because of Putin vs the clueless western leaders, it is simply that the Russians have a huge historical and geographical advantage in the Ukraine over any combination of western powers. True, Russia did pathetically drop the ball, but things are now clearly changing and Russia is now in a rather enviable position in which she

can rely mostly on unilateral actions (such as handing out Russian passports) while letting the Ukronazi occupied Ukraine slowly destroy itself.

So what happens if nothing happens?

How do you say “*Lasciate ogni speranza, o voi che entrate*” in Ukrainian?

And since a (currently entirely theoretical) “united West” can’t do anything to prevent Russia from reaching one of the outcomes acceptable to her, neither can any Ukrainian President, Zelenskii or other.

Right now, the supporters of a Banderastan are going through the famous Kübler-Ross stages of griefs: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance: currently, most of them are zig-zagging between bargaining and depression; acceptance is still far beyond their – very near – horizon. Except that Zelenskii has nothing left to bargain with.

The prospects for the future of the Ukraine are rather grim, at least in the short to mid term. What will actually happen is impossible to predict (it is much easier to say what will not happen), but here are a few options I find credible:

A collapse of the central authority followed by a surge in violence and a break-up of the rump-Ukraine into some entity in the West. The south will probably seek quasi-independence to make business with Russia while most of the violence will take place in the north-central region which is very polarized and only silent because of the fear of the SBU and/or Nazi death squads. As soon as Kiev loses control, these regions are likely to rise up. If that happens the current line-of-contact will become an international border between the LDNR and the rest of the Ukraine. Most UN members will not recognize the LDNR (fear of Uncle Shmuel) but one will: Russia. And that will be the end of the “independent Ukraine” as we know it.

I would never exclude a last minute patriotic coup or, even more likely, counter-coup by Ukrainian patriots in the armed forces, not necessarily one supported by Moscow, but one which will at least replace frankly rather demented Ukronazis with more pragmatic people. There are plenty of such people in the Ukraine, some are known and some are less known. If I were “Ze” I would keep an eye on Vadim Rabinovich, not because he is my personal ideal candidate, but because he is very smart and very well connected. He is not at all popular in the Ukraine, but he has strong support in the West and in Israel. Check out this [rather interesting Wikipedia](#)

[article](#) on Rabinovich and see why he is a typical “мутный типчик” (roughly, an “unclear” guy – meaning somebody you would suspect of being a crook). He is unlikely to ever be elected by the people. But he, or somebody like him, might make a good “anti-Nazi” front-figure for a coup (or counter-coup) should the need for such a figure become useful to the Empire. By the way, the Kremlin’s reaction to a Rabinovich (or similar) led coup (or counter-coup) would be just like when Iulia Timoshenko came to power: they will work with any person who is a pragmatist and who can deliver on promises.

Finally, a war in the East is always, and by definition, a possibility for as long as a rabidly russophobic regime is in power in Kiev. From a purely military point of view, any Ukrainian attack against the LDNR would be suicidal: either the Novorussians will take care of the attacking force, or the Russians will. But either way, the Ukrainian attacking force will be destroyed. From a political point of view, however, such an attack might make sense simply because this would be a gigantic distraction allowing all the Nazi rats to leave the sinking ship and quietly slip away. Finally, there is no doubt that the Neocons have been dreaming of a (real, not fictional) Russian attack as a way to shock Europe back into total submission to Uncle Shmuel. This is also why I believe that a Russian counter-attack on Ukrainian forces might be limited to long range strikes (kinetic and electronic) and the imposition of a no-fly zone.

Conclusion Russia can wait, the Ukraine cannot

It’s really that simple. In fact, time was always on the Russian side here, even if not necessarily on the side of the people of Novorussia who have suffered through the horrors of this war. However, it appears now that the Novorussians have been successful in their efforts to turn a hodgepodge of more or less trained militias into a credible and disciplined military force capable of tactical and operational actions, in other words, capable of dangerous counter-attacks. Finally, Russian policies towards the rump-Ukraine and Novorussia are now all unilateral in nature, which gives Russia a great deal of flexibility.

With a weak leader like “Ze” the Ukraine looks stuck in the no man’s land somewhere between denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. The faster the Ukrainian leaders get to the “acceptance” phase, the less the people of the Ukraine will have to suffer (not that anybody in the Ukronazi leadership cares about the common people).

At the end of all arguments and theories, there is a crucial fact which cannot be ignored: the Euromaidan Revolution (which is what the coup against Yanukovich and the subsequent civil war in the Donbass are) has failed. In fact, it was stillborn from Day1 being built on an ideology which most Ukrainians did not share. Furthermore, this revolution alienated the most productive and richest parts of the Ukraine: the Donbass and Crimea. Next, the Urkonazi regime was soundly defeated by the Novorussian insurgents not once, but twice. Finally, by severing all economic ties with Russia, the independent Ukraine basically committed *seppuku*. None of that can be reversed or easily fixed.

As always, in the battle between ideology and reality the latter prevailed. The outcome of this struggle between ideology and reality was never in doubt, at least not for rational, pragmatic, people, and so the blood and tears of all those who needlessly died, were maimed or had to become refugees will forever remain on the consciences of those who started this “revolutionary fire”: the leaders of the united West.

The Saker

Can Russia (or Iran) survive without China?

November 21, 2019

In a recent article entitled “[China, Bolivia and Venezuela are proof that social democracy cannot thrive in the global capitalist order](#)” my China-based friend and correspondent [Jeff J. Brown](#) asked me an exceedingly interesting and important question. He wrote:

Russia is a social democracy, with a large, successful people owned industrial sector and many social services for the 99% from the Soviet era. But, unlike Bolivia and Ukraine, it is avoiding the West's color revolution poison pill, because since 1999, Russia has gone from strength to strength, under the inspired leadership of patriotic President Vladimir Putin. But like all social democracies, the problem is what happens if another Western whore Boris Yeltsin succeeds Putin, and returns Russia to its dystopian Wall Street rape of the 1990s? Then what? It only took Macri four short years to bring Argentina back onto its groveling knees. Without a 100% nationalized media, Russians had better be demanding that Putin & Russian Patriots Inc. work overtime to censor all the Western overthrow garbage that is put in Cyrillic ink and on the airwaves. I would love to hear what my good friend Andrei Raevsky thinks about this at The Saker (<http://thesaker.is/>), because let's be honest: without China's, Russia's and Iran's continued anti-imperial independence and socialist success into the 21st century, humanity can kiss its ass goodbye!

Let's begin by deconstructing the assumptions and implications of Jeff's question. China and Russia *could* be separated.

The first assumptions Jeff makes are the following ones:

1. *Russia is a social democracy*
2. *The Russian media is not 100% state controlled*
3. *A new Eltsin might succeed Putin*
4. *The West is saturating the Russian information space with garbage*
5. *That western propaganda can still strongly impact Russia*

6. *China and Russia *could* be separated (hence the need to prevent that as the central thesis of Jeff)*

And, finally, considering the above, Jeff offers the following compelling implication for the China-Russia-Iran triangle:

1. *Considering the above, China's independence and support for Russia and Iran are vital for the sovereignty and freedom, if not survival, of Russia and Iran*

Now let's begin by looking into Jeff's assumptions:

Russia is a social democracy:

Yes and no. If we define a social democracy as being a specific polity and system of laws, then Russia is a social democracy. However, if we define social democracy as a specific polity, system of laws **and social culture**, then I would argue that to the extent that Russia is, indeed, a social democracy, she is a rather weird one. What do I mean by that?

By that I mean that thanks to the nightmare of “democracy” under Eltsin and his US curators, and thanks to the recent explosion of “democracy” in the Ukraine, the Russian people have by and large come to consider the words “liberal” and “democracy” as four letter words. For example, the word “либерал” (liberal) has now given birth to a derived word либераст which takes the first letters of the word “liberal” and adds the last letters of the word педераст (pederast – a rude word for homosexual [yes, in Russian homosexuality and pederasty are not separated!]) which results in the new word “liberast” the closest to which in English would be something like “libfag”, hardly a compliment. In some interpretations, a “liberast” is also somebody who has been “[f**ked by democracy](#)“. Not much better... As for the word “демократия” (democracy) for years it has already been called “[дерьмократия](#)” (using the first letters of дерьмо (der'mo or shit) and the last letter of democracy to create der'mokratia or “shitocracy”). Finally, there is also the saying that “демократия, это власть демократов” (democracy is the rule of the democrats), which for a country which has undergone the 1990s and seen the Ukraine being comprehensively FUBARed is ominous; not funny at all. All this is simply to show that culturally the Russian society is not at all your typical social democracy. It is a sort of democracy in which the majority of the people do not believe in democracy. This is very important, crucial even, and I will address this issue later.

The Russian media is not 100% state controlled:

That is absolutely true! However, it misses an important point: the real profile of the Russian media which is much more complex than “state controlled” vs “free media”. To make a long story short, the main TV channels, while not really “controlled” by the state at all, are mostly pro-Kremlin. But here we need to get the cause and effect right: these channels are not pro-Kremlin only because they get state funds or because of the political power of the Kremlin, the main reason why they are pro-Kremlin is the terrible rating of those media outlets who took a strong anti-Kremlin position.

To make my point, I want to mention the rabidly anti-Kremlin TV station which is very well known in Russia (Dozhd’ – see [here](#) for the (predictably complimentary) entry in Wikipedia for this TV channel). In fact, Dozhd’ is just the best known of a fairly extensive anti-Kremlin media but, in reality, there are many more outlets which hold an anti-Kremlin pro-Empire line. However, as I explained in a 2016 article entitled “[Counter-Propaganda, Russian Style](#)” and then, again, in 2017, in the article “[Revisiting Russian Counter-Propaganda Methods](#)” the Kremlin has developed a very effective counter-propaganda strategy: instead of suppressing the Empire’s propaganda (like the Soviets did, most *un*successfully), the Kremlin now directly funds that same propaganda! Not only does the (state-owned) Gazprom finance Dozhd’ – the western and Russian liberal guests which ridicule themselves on Russian TV are also generously paid for each of their appearances. Even hardcore Ukronazi nutcases get invited regularly (when they truly overdo it they also get into fights, or get kicked out of the studios, which is all very much fun to watch and is therefore watched by millions). The truth is that at this point the AngloZionist propaganda in Russia has much more of a very healthy “vaccination” effect than the ability to convince anybody beyond the “traditional” 2-4% of folks in Russia who still think that the West is some kind of heaven on earth and Russia an ugly, vicious and freedom crushing “Mordor”.

This being said, there is one channel through which the worst of the western consumer-society propaganda still permeates Russia: commercials. Russian commercials are mostly absolutely disgusting; they basically vehiculate one crude and simple message “Russians must become US Americans”. That propaganda via commercials is, I think the single most toxic and insidious form of de-russification I can think of and it is far more dangerous than any other means of “defacing” Russia.

Finally, and to my great regret, media outlets like RT and Sputnik have decided to “go native”. I suppose and they now cater to western tastes much more than to Russian ones. The quasi constant “reporting” about MMA fights, minimally clad ladies, sex in all its shapes and forms and Hollywood gossip – all of this just goes to show that the folks in charge of these media outlets have decided that catering to the lowest possible social common denominator is the way to promote Russia abroad. I am not so sure. What began with “Question More” and “Telling the Untold” now seems more preoccupied with trying to copy the yellow press in the UK than to challenge the Empire. I very much regret that state of affairs.

Unfortunately, there are also a lot of 5th columnists and russophobes in these media outlets (especially in their online, Internet-based websites; the actual radio/TV shows are mostly better).

So all is not rosy in the Russian media scene, but its not all bad either.

A new Eltsin might succeed Putin

Here I can only completely agree, and that is very scary. Due to the lack of space, I will present my arguments in a short, bullet-point, list:

- *“Russia” is still very much a “one man show” meaning that Putin himself, as a person, is still absolutely vital to the current functioning of Russia. Not only are most Russians still strongly supportive of him personally, but there are no credible candidates to replace him. Yes, there are a few potential candidates out there (in no special order: Ivanov, Shoigu and Rogozin would be the best known, but there are others, of course), but what makes it all worse is that historically, Russia, unlike China, has a very **bad** record of successions.*
- *The 5th column is still there and while it keeps a very low profile (current events favor the Eurasian Sovereignists), it is still there, literally in all branches of power and very much inside the Moscow elites who hate Putin for putting an end to what they saw as the “Bonanza of the 1990s”.*
- *There ***is*** a patriotic Russian opposition to Putin, and it is slowly growing, but it is poorly organized, has a lot of clueless nostalgics of the Soviet era and a lot of its criticisms are, frankly, naive or plain silly (along with very valid points too!). I don’t see this opposition capable of producing a strong and credible leader. But that might change in the future.*

- *Thus the cornerstone of “Putinism” is Putin himself. With him gone, for whatever reason, Putinism could very rapidly fade too. This might be a good or a bad thing depending on the specific circumstances, but the chances that this might be a very bad thing are higher than the opposite being true.*

“Putin The Man”, urgently needs to be replaced by “Putin The System”, but that is truly a herculean task because that means reforming/purging most of the immense and powerful Russian bureaucracy and find somewhere a new generation of men and women who could be both effective and trusted. The problem is that in most cases when one man goes against a system, the system wins. Putin is the proverbial case of a very good man in a very bad system. True, he has successfully reformed the two branches of government which were most needed to make it possible for both him and Russia to survive the war the Empire was waging on Russia: the armed forces and the intelligence/security forces. Other parts of the Russian state are still in a terrible shape (the entire legal system for starters!).

I think that the risk of an Eltsin-like prostitute coming to power is real, even if the bulk of the population would not necessarily approve of it (or be divided about it). Long-term historical stability of a huge country like Russia cannot come from a man. It can only come from institutions. And just as Peter I destroyed the traditional Russian monarchy, so can one man destroy the current “new Russia” (for lack of a better descriptor), especially if this “new Russia” has only one man as its cornerstone.

Finally, history teaches us that every time that Russia is weak or disunited, the western powers immediately pounce and intervene, including with military means. The Poles are still dreaming about yet another chance to prove Churchill’s diagnosis about Poland true and pounce on both the Ukraine and Russia if given the chance.

The West is saturating the Russian information space with garbage and western propaganda can still strongly impact Russia

As we have seen above, these are both at least partially true, but they are also not that much of a big deal. This is clearly a source of potential concern, a danger, but not a threat (a danger being vague, a threat specific). To the extent that this is a bad thing, this is mostly due to the hyper-materialistic consumer culture which currently competes against a much more traditional, Russian culture. It is hard to say which one will win. The former has much, much bigger financial means, the latter one has a strong ‘home turf advantage’. Only time will show which will prevail. So long as

many Russians will think “western propaganda lies” (which most understand) AND are attracted to western-style commercials (which are, in so many ways, an even much more effective and insidious form of propaganda), the jury will remain out on who will prevail should instability return to Russia.

China and Russia *could* be separated

This is probably the most important assumption made by Jeff. First, since this is completely hypothetical, and since we are not future-seeing prophets let's first agree to never say never and not dismiss this possibility out of hand. This being said, I would like to remind everybody that Russia and China have gradually changed the labels which they applied to the other side. The latest (as far as I know, Chinese speakers please correct me if needed!) expression used by Xi and other Chinese officials is “*Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era*“. There is a lot to unpack here, but let's just say that this does not sound like the Chinese came up with that concept lightly or that they have many misgivings about the future of the relationship with Russia. As for the Russians, they have now openly used the term “ally” on many occasions, including Putin. In Russian that word “ally” (союзник) is a very strong one and contrasts sharply with the cynical and disgusted way the Russians always speak about their western “partners” (which often shocks those who don't speak Russian).

And it is not all sweet talk either. The Russians and the Chinese have had many and major joint military maneuvers, they have practiced the Russian equivalent of the US/NATO “Combined Joint Task Force” concept (see [here](#) for details). Thus, while not formal allies, Russia and China do all the things which close allies do. I would even argue that the “informal symbiosis” between Russia and China is far stronger than the NATO alliance.

It is my opinion that what Putin and Xi have done is something which has no previous equivalent in history, at least as far as I know. Even though both Russia and China have been empires in the past, I strongly believe that both of these countries have entered a “post-imperial phase” in which the trappings of empire have been replaced by an acute sense that empires are extremely bad, not only for the nations which they oppress, but also for the nation which hosts them. Both Russia and China have paid a horrendous price for their imperial years and both Russia and China completely understand that the people of the USA are also amongst the prime victims of the (transnational) Anglo-Zionist Empire, even if that is all too often forgotten. Not

only do they not want to repeat their own mistakes, they see the USA dying in the quicksands of imperialism and the last thing they want is to jump in and join the US.

I believe that the relationship between Russia and China is a symbiosis, which is much stronger than any alliances because while the latter can be broken, the former typically cannot (at least not without extremely severe consequences). I also believe that Putin and Xi both understand that the fact that Russia and China are so completely different is not a problem, but a tremendous asset: they fit perfectly, like Lego or puzzle pieces. What Russia has China does not and vice-versa. And, just to clarify for the logically challenged: both sides also understand that they will never get from the other side by war what they could get by peaceful exchange. Yes, the silly Polish dream of having Russia invaded by China several times (an [old Polish joke](#) of sorts) is only a reflection of the ancient Polish inferiority complex, not of geostrategic realities :-)

Of course, in theory, anything could happen. But I personally see no chain of events which could be sufficient to threaten the Sino-Russian symbiotic relationship, not even a collapse of “New Russia Putinism” (not elegant, but functional for our purposes) or the kind of chaos which an Eltsin type of comprador regime could try to reimpose on Russia. At the end of the day, if Russia collapses then China will hold truly immense financial and economic power over Russia and will therefore be able to impose at least a China-friendly regime. In that extremely unlikely case, Russia would, of course, lose her sovereignty, but not to the West, but to China. That is not quite what Jeff had in mind.

Conclusion:

Yes, Russia and China need each other. I would argue that they need each other. Vitally. And yes, the “loss” of one would threaten the other. But that is not just true for Russia, it is also very true of China (which desperately needs Russian energy, high-tech, natural resources, weapons systems but most of all, Russian experience: for most of her existence Russia was threatened, invaded, attacked, sanctioned, boycotted and disparaged by a long succession of western states, and she defeated them all. Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, but each time Russia prevailed. The determination and ability to resist the West is something which is deeply embedded in the Russian cultural DNA (this in sharp contrast with the rest of the so-called “East European” countries). Finally, and for all their very real recent advances, the Chinese armed forces are still far behind the Russians (or the USA for that matter) and in a

one-on-one war against the USA China would definitely lose, especially if the USA goes “all out”. Russia, on the other hand, has the means to turn the US and Europe into a post-industrial nuclear wasteland (using nuclear and, most importantly, non-nuclear munitions!).

I would also add something Jeff did not address: Iran. I believe that both Russia and China also very much need Iran. Okay, that is not a vital need, both Russia and China could survive without an allied Iran, but Iran offers immense advantages to both countries, if only because, thanks to the truly phenomenal stupidity of the Neocons the USA’s breathtakingly stupid policies in the Middle-East ([here](#) is just the latest example) have turned Iran into a regional super-power eclipsing both Israel and the KSA. Furthermore, if Russia has shown much more political and moral courage than China (which, lets be honest, has been pretty happy to have Russia taking the brunt of the Empire’s attacks), Iran has shown much more political and moral courage than Russia, especially concerning the slow-motion genocide perpetrated by the Zionist Entity in Palestine.

And this brings us full circle to the discussion of what kind of country Russia currently really is. Russia is not the Soviet Union. Neither is she pre-1917 Russia. But what is she really?

Nobody really knows, I think.

It is a moving target, a process. This process might lead to a new and stable “new Russia”, but that is by no means certain. Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Article 13 of the Russian Constitution say:

- 1. In the Russian Federation ideological diversity shall be recognized*
- 2. No ideology may be established as state or obligatory one.*
- 3. In the Russian Federation political diversity and multi-party system shall be recognized.*

In other words, not only is there no “no official ideology” in Russia, there is an explicit recognition for a multi-party political system (itself an ideological statement, by the way). These are all potentially very dangerous and toxic items in the Russian Constitution which already are hindering a true national, cultural, psychological and spiritual rebirth of Russia. Iran, in contrast, has succeeded in creating an Islamic Republic which is both truly and unapologetically Islamic and truly democratic, at

least in the sense that, unlike western democracies which are mostly run by minorities and for minorities (or a [coalition of minorities](#)), in Iran the majority supports the system in place.

And since the vast majority of the Russian people do not want a single-party-system or a return to Soviet times, yet don't believe in (western style) democracy, Russian intellectuals would be well advised to take a very close and careful look at what I would call the "Iranian model"; not to simply copy it, but to see what aspects of this model could be adapted to Russian realities. Historical Russia was an Orthodox monarchy. That time is gone and will never return. Soviet Russia was a Marxist atheistic state. That time is also forever gone. Modern Russia can only find references, lessons and implications in her past, but she cannot simply resurrect Czarist or Communist Russia. Of course, neither can she reject her entire history and declare it all "bad" (which is what Russian "liberals" always do, which explains why they are so hated).

I don't know what the future Russia will look like. I am not even totally sure that this new Russia will ever really happen (though my gut feeling is that it will). I hope that it will, but whether that happens or not will not be decided in China or by China (or any other country). To conclude on a famous quote by Karl Marx "the emancipation of the workers must be the work of the workers themselves" (in Russian: "Освобождение рабочих должно быть делом самих рабочих") which a famous Russian 1928 book turned into "the salvation of those who are drowning has to be the action of those drowning" (in Russian: "Спасение утопающих — дело рук самих утопающих"). Whatever version you prefer (I prefer the 2nd one), the meaning is clear: you need to solve your problems by yourself or with those who share that problem with you. In other words, Russians are the only ones who can save or destroy the Russian nation (I mean "Russian" in the traditional, Russian, multi-ethnic and multi-religious meaning of the words *руссий* and *российский* which in traditional Russian are [both interchangeable or different depending on the context](#)).

The Saker

PS: I leave you with a photo which, imho, speaks a thousand words



Legitimate questions which need answers

November 27, 2019



When I wrote my recent article “[Deconstructing Islamophobia](#)” I expected a rather outraged reaction from the usual circles, but I have to admit that the actual level of outrage and even pure rage really surprised me. In fact, I never realized that hatred for, and fear of, Islam had reached such a level, especially in the USA. From time to time I write something which really rattles the cages of those who like their reality simple, black and white, and who have a profound aversion for analysis, nuance or any form of complexity. But I have to admit that the article on Islamophobia is probably the one which resulted in the most hysterical outbursts of a weird kind of impotent rage. I therefore want to revisit this topic and give the other side a chance to respond to some of the absolutely unavoidable questions which western Islamophobia at least should elicit in the thinking person. Here are a few questions to which I would love to hear some fact based or logically developed answers.

But first, let's make a few key assumption **purely for argument's sake**.

- 1. Islam is a religion of violence, it was spread with violence and it condones violence, including for religious reasons. In fact, Islam encourages violence in its followers.*

2. *Islam is a medieval and barbaric religion. It is completely incompatible with western values.*
3. *Immigrants from Muslim countries represent a clear and present danger for western societies and if their number exceeds a certain percentage they can take over a western society and impose their religious values including Sharia law.*

Now, I think that even the most rabid Alt-Righter is at least vaguely aware that Islam has several schools of jurisprudence and theological interpretation, even if, by our definition, these schools are all equally “bad”. Which brings me to my first question for my detractors:

The question of discrimination

From their own words, it appears that Islamophobes have come to the conclusion that all this talk of different “strains” of Islam is totally useless and potentially self-deceiving. The truth is, at least according to the Islamophobes, that all of Islam is evil and dangerous, maybe with some minimal variations here and there, but only on the margins. Okay, if I take the point of view of the Latin Papacy towards what they called the “Photian Schismatics” (aka Orthodox Christians), there are [three “solutions” the Latins came up with to “solve” the Photian Schism:](#)

1. *Convert 1/3rd of the Orthodox Christians*
2. *Expel another 1/3rd of the Orthodox Christians*
3. *Murder the remaining 1/3rd of the Orthodox Christians*

Since the Latin Papists are probably the most advanced and experienced “genociders” (not sure if that is English or not) in history, let’s apply their wisdom to the “Islamic problem” and offer the same “solutions”:

1. *Convert 1/3rd of 1.8 billion Muslims*
2. *Expel 1/3rd of 1.8 billion Muslims*
3. *Murder 1/3rd of 1.8 billion Muslims and, just to cover our bases*
4. *any combination and ratio of the three solutions above*

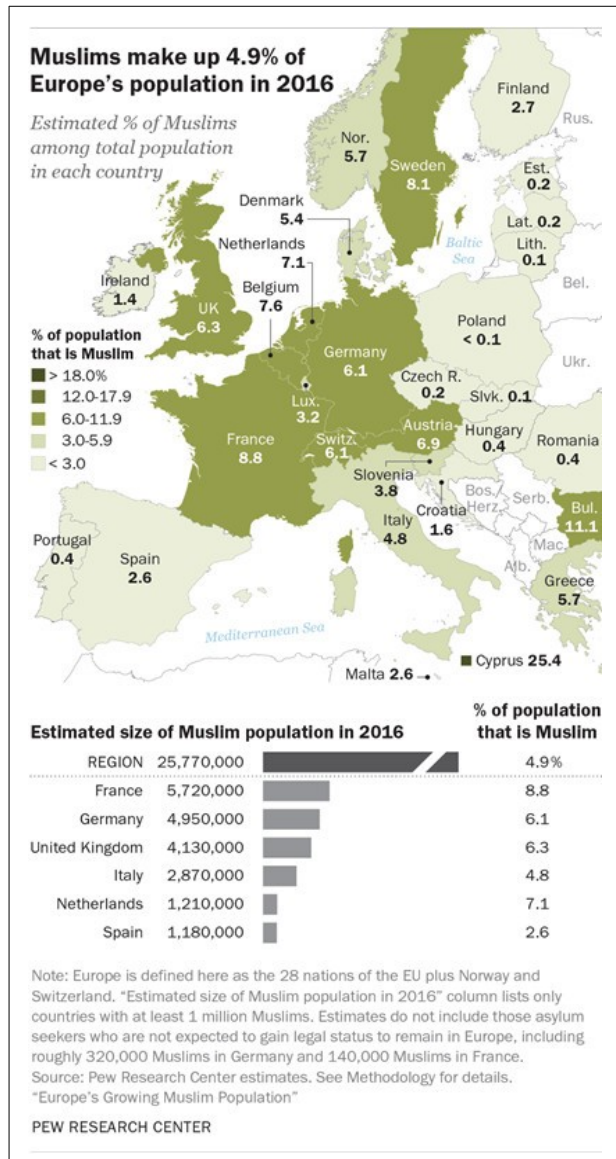
Yes, genocide, as a concept, was invented by the Papacy which was also the first to engage in it.

True, the leaders of the West never hated Islam as much as they hated Orthodoxy – hence their recurrent “ecumenical war coalitions” à la “Crimean War” or à la “NATO War Against the Serbian Nation”

So much for the so-called “Christian West”...

Now if that is our plan, then I suggest that discrimination between the various Muslim groups would be absolutely crucial. If you really and sincerely believe that you can convert, expel and/or murder 1.8 billion Muslims then I would like to also sell you a few bridges in prime locations on our beautiful planet, really. In fact, I would also offer to sell you the Moon, Mars and Venus for one cheap price since, truly, you apparently have no ability to think critically. Because, let’s be honest here, anybody with a minimal knowledge of history would immediately see that this plan is simply not doable, regardless of how much hatred one has for Islam and Muslims.

I submit that whether you hate Islam or not, the ability to discriminate between various “strands” of Islam (which is one of the things I have always advocated) is crucial irrespective of whether you think that Islam is a religion of peace or a religion of war.



So here is my first question: *are you seriously advocating taking on and declaring your intention of aggressively dealing with a religion which has a total potential of 1.8 billion people closing ranks and resisting your aggression?*

Next, comes the question of positive values

This is another basic and simple one. If you condemn Islam or even oppose it vs some western values, you should at least have a rough list of such western values which you want to defend and in the name of which you will oppose Islam in general and the potential actions of Muslim immigrants in the West. I mean, you cannot at the same time declare that Islam is “homophobic” AND declare that you are defending the values of the “Christian West”. Likewise, you cannot ban Sharia law for corporal punishment AND support torture in your own jails. Finally, you most definitely cannot accuse Islam of advocating the crushing of pluralism and free speech when you yourself use all the power of the state and the power of the corporations (which, in reality, own that state) to crush free speech and pluralism in your own country. If you prefer, *you cannot oppose Islam BOTH in the name of Pope Pius XII AND Conchita Wurst.*

So here is my next question: *in the name of what, and with which values, do you propose to deal with Islam? what alternative model can you offer the Muslims which they might find as an attractive alternative? What are your (so-called) “Western values”?*

If, say, “family” is a western value, who do you think did more to destroy it, the French themselves with the rabidly anti-religion and anti-family 1789 Revolution or the Arab Muslim immigrants (which the French capitalists deliberately imported into France, even with their entire families!). For all the (partially true) accusations of homosexuality being present in some (true, but not all!) Muslim countries, who do you really think does more to show “understanding” and “an open mind” about homosexuality (even going as far as allowing homosexuals to adopt children!) – western Christians or Muslims?

Think carefully!

Next, the question of the dangers of what I call “ignoring Bismark”.

Bismark once famously wrote that “politics is the art of the possible”. I fully agree and I submit that this also applies to how non-Muslims ought to shape their relationship with the Muslim world. Next is the issue of intention vs capability. I call that:

The question of the commensurability of goals and means

Again, that is a very simple one. Whatever you propose to do with Muslims and Islam – first you need to make sure that you have the tools needed to implement your plans. Let's take a simple example: France. [According to a research paper from the Pew Foundation](#) as of mid-2016, there were 5.7 million Muslims in France (8.8% of the country's population) and Islam is the 2nd religion in France after Latin Christianity. Also check out this graphic from the same article, as it gives you estimates of the number of Muslims living in Europe.

In reality, however, the real number of Christians in France is artificially bloated because, just as in Russia, these figures simply include those who identify themselves as “Christians”, including in the cultural sense, and who, in reality, are not practicing Christians at all. I believe that since the proportion of Muslims who take their religion seriously is much higher than in Christianity (including Orthodox Christianity) and ***so if we really could compare the figures of God-fearing and pious Muslims versus God-fearing and pious Christians then the first religion of France (and probably Russia) already is Islam and not Christianity.***

Still, since I cannot substantiate this in any way. Let's stick to the official figures and allow me to ask a few basic question about France (but they are valid for most western countries).

When you propose to expel Muslims from France, ***are you seriously contemplating the deportation of almost 6 million people?***

Did I hear you say “oh no, we will only deport two categories: illegal immigrants and religious extremists”. That is all fine and well, but let me ask you how many people currently living in France qualify under these criteria? And, no less importantly, how many Muslims are there in France who do NOT qualify under your criteria, but who WOULD vehemently oppose the deportation of their family members, friends, members of their cultural or religious communities? How many of these “good Muslims” will demand due process in each case? How many of these “good Muslims” will also collect funds to oppose Islamophobic policies and propaganda?

Because one thing is clear: if you want to deport only illegal immigrants and all religious extremists, then maybe you have a chance. But if you declare “Islam per se” as the threat, then all you are doing is uniting all Muslims to resist you and your hatred of their religion. Not very smart, to put it very gently.

Alternatively, when you propose to curtail the religious rights of French Muslims, what tools of the state do you plan to use to enforce their compliance? The special services (intelligence? counter-intelligence? counter-espionage? counter-terrorist?). The police forces? The armed forces?

As somebody who has personally dealt with exactly that question (how to deal with mass social explosions of the future based on past experiences) from the inside I can tell you that this was one of the tasks which was often discussed in (strictly confidential) meetings between military, internal security and police experts in all western countries, even those who would never admit it. Furthermore, western powers also engaged in numerous (very interesting) command-staff exercises in which the issue of how to deal with explosions of social unrest were also modeled, tested and evaluated. I cannot discuss the details of our findings, but I can tell you this: neither the intelligence community, nor the police, nor the military are the correct “tool” to deal with such issues. Why? Because typically the intel community is already busy with other issues and has neither the manpower nor the finance to start seriously monitoring millions of people, especially when many of those millions speak a different language and have a very tightly knit community.

Neither are police forces a solution. They are much better trained in law than security or military personnel, but they lack both the expertise and, literally, the firepower needed to deal with severe social unrest or, even less so, a full-scale insurrection.

As for the military, it has plenty of firepower, but it is trained to destroy enemy forces. ***If the 92% majority chooses to unleash its armed forces against an 8% minority that is called a civil war*** and, by the way, that is EXACTLY what happened in the Ukraine and the Donbass. ***Do you really want that for your country?***

In theory it is really simple: ban halal killing of animals (but don't touch kosher animal killing), ban halal butcher shops (but not kosher shops), ban Quranic schools (but don't touch Ulpanim or Yeshivas), ban mosques (but not synagogues), ban hijabs (but not sheitels, shpitzels or yarmulke), etc. If asked about this, the simple reply is that Islam is a medieval religion which is a religion of violence and wars whereas ***Rabbinical Judaism (aka Pharisaic Talmudism) is a progressive religion of love and peace, that's all. Heck, the so-called “Christian West” has now even officially adopted the so-called Noahide Laws which declare Christianity a form of idolatry!*** Last, but certainly not least, wage war on as many Muslim countries as possible and

allow Israel to turn you into a voiceless colony, proud of its host status, at least for the Judaic parasite.

Reality is very different however.

First, being the Judaic's/Zionists' "bitch" usually makes you hated and despised everywhere, including in Israel, by the way. That also inevitably alienates a big chunk of your patriotically-inclined population. But let's ignore all that. In fact, let's forget about the Middle-East and let's assume that 92% of the French people are totally united behind a plan to "de-Islamize France". Now think it through and you will immediately see the problem.

Even if only 1M of the 5M Muslims in France actually resist, your combined security/police/military forces could not deal with that kind of resistance without a huge bloodbath which will ruin your country (again, this is exactly what the Nazi-occupied Ukraine tried after the Euromaidan coup!). Furthermore, civil wars tend to radicalize people. Thus a mass deportation of Muslim immigrants will inevitably generate a sense of outrage combined with a much revived sense of what the French call "communautarisme": a type of identity politics centered on the clan, the tribe, the ethnicity. In other words, those kinds of policies will only serve to create more, not less, crazed jihadis! Is that really a good idea? Civil war with a simultaneous rise of extremism? How smart is it to advocate for this?

Besides, are you really sure that you got the right target?

The question of cause and effect

When I was a small kid I was taught that pre-1917 Russia was some kind of Russian Orthodox heaven on earth. Everybody was heroic, kind, brilliant, the Russian people loved the Czar and the Court, they even loved the aristocracy and the intelligentsia. In other words, Russia was happy and if it wasn't for the evil Jews and the evil Germans, nothing at all would have happened in 1917. When you are 10, that kind of narrative makes sense. But not when you are an adult (at least one would hope so!).

Simply put: there is simply no way that the thesis that Jews and Germans destroyed Russia can be sustained; it is *prima facie* ridiculous! Empires don't simply collapse because of some foreign agents, that is counter-factual. Besides, if you look at which Russian social class did the most to destroy Russia, it ain't the Jews or the Germans, it is the Russian aristocracy, especially the (comparatively) new Petrine aristocracy.

Simply put, Russia has been under various degrees of foreign occupation since 300 years now, from Peter I to Eltsin. And the only reason why the Bolsheviks could seize power so easily is that all the Bolsheviks overthrew was the terminally incompetent regime of Kerensky which itself only came to power by means of a (absolutely illegal and immoral) coup against Nicholas II organized by, you guessed it, the Russian aristocracy and intelligentsia! Bolshevik Jews overthrew a totally corrupt, oligarchic regime which was Masonic through and through and which was no less russophobic than the Bolsheviks themselves.

There is a moral, social, cultural, psychological and even spiritual equivalent to AIDS. This is also an immunity disorder, but rather than affecting our biological immune system, it affects our moral, social, cultural, psychological and even spiritual “immune systems”. Pre-1917 Russia was suffering from “spiritual AIDS” (that category includes all the others, at least in my terminology) and probably *any* foreign hostile agent could have taken over in 1917. History decided that the Russian monarchy would collapse under the treacherous actions of the Russian elites, and that Russian democracy would collapse under the (no less treacherous) actions of the Bolsheviks. But if these had not seized power, than some other group, any group, would have eventually seized power. The ugly truth is that pre-1917 Russia was already dying and except for a (sizable and therefore important) minority of Christians which chose death over apostasy, most Russians by 1917 were spiritually blinded (if that topic interests you, read Solzhenitsyn, especially, his “Red Wheel” saga or any book by Ivan Solonevich and, especially, his “The Grand Fraud of February” (assuming you read Russian or can find a translation). Memoirs of those who actually witnessed 1917 are also most interesting.

Bottom line is this: ***empires fall when they are weak and that fall always begins with a loss of identity.***

Now, Alt-Righters & Co. blame others (Jews, Muslim, Blacks, immigrants, whatever) for what they perceive as a loss of identity for White westerners. They are both right and wrong. They ARE right when they observe a loss of identity of White Westerners, that is quite true, but they are naive to the extreme when they attribute it to “others” (whatever “others” happen to be blamed at that moment). The truth is that many factors have come together to de-Westernize the West. And yes, the West was mostly White. I find racial categories poorly defined, thus useless and even misleading. But even I won't deny that Europe is a White continent. I just don't think

that color is what defines it, or makes it different from other parts of the world, but the notion that other races played a major other role in European history (other than that of victims of European imperialism, of course) is rather silly. Okay, the Arabs (if you want to think of them as Brown as opposed to White), did contribute a lot to the rediscovery of antiquity by a Europe which was mostly ignorant, but even that influence should not be exaggerated either. And yes, the Judaics were successful in infiltrating and subordinating the Vatican to their ideology, but most of that really only happened after WWII.

What Alt-Righters & Co. fail to realize is that most European borders are completely artificial, along with some of the main European countries (Germany and Italy for starters!). Furthermore, Europe always lived through wave after wave of immigrants (just like Russia, by the way), and none of them made Europe weaker. If we want to be really honest we would admit that those who did the most to destroy Europe were the clueless European ruling classes which committed collective suicide during WWI. Only then came the man who did even more than anybody else to destroy Europe, and he was a famous European nationalist: Adolf Hitler. In a way, Europe did with WWI what Russia did in February 1917 (suicide) and Europe did in WWII what the Bolsheviks did to Russia (rule of fanatic extremists). First came the clueless “democrats” and “liberals” and only THEN came the tough SOB.

When I see the USA today, or the EU, I see a civilization which committed suicide long before any immigrants, foreigners, heretics, or any other “other” came to use a opportunity which presented itself.

The real traitors to Russia are first and foremost Russians themselves (say the Russian aristocracy)

The real traitors to the United States are first and foremost US Americans themselves (say the Dems and the Hillary & Biden gang of Neocons)

The real traitors to Europe are first and foremost Europeans themselves – say those who first bomb barrier nations to immigration, like Libya, and then whine when a tsunami of african immigrants crosses Libya and the Mediterranean to find a better life (by the way – these countries are in a shape Trump would refer to as “shithole” primarily – even if not entirely – courtesy of the collective West who turned these parts of the world into shitholes in the first place!).

I find it hilarious when US Americans complain about Hispanic immigration. They don't realize that these immigrants from Latin America are a real blessing: they are family oriented, hard working people who do not contribute to criminality at all (Ron Unz [proved that a long time ago](#)) and who are much more Christian than most US Americans. If you really want to defend your "Western Civilization" then the first step might be to completely open the border with Mexico and declare that all Latin Americans are welcome to live in the USA. And if the US is concerned about too many Latin American immigrants coming to the USA, then the first thing to do to stop that trend is to stop Yankee imperialism in all its forms and finally give the countries of Latin America a chance to prosper in peace.

Instead, US 'patriots' want to keep their country Christian and White by reducing the amount of Hispanics currently living in the USA. All I will say is this: be careful, very careful, for what you wish for!

So are you really so sure that Mexican or Salvadorian immigrants are such a big threat to the "western civilization"?

Is it not high time for what is left of the so-called "West" to decide once and for all what it stands for and what kind of immigrants it wants or not?!

My humble suggestion is this: *define once and for all what your so-called western values really are, then have the courage to stand up for them, always, and you might find that Muslims or immigrants are really not a problem at all. Or keep hating the wrong people and witness the end of your civilization by suicide.*

The last question: and what about those pesky and evil Russkies? What have they been up to recently?

Well, very much UNLIKE the West, the "New Russia" of Putin has made major efforts to forge an alliance with traditional Islam against the western-backed Takfiris! I cannot discuss it all here, but I covered this issue in my article "[Russia and Islam, connecting the dots and discerning the future](#)". I will summarize it here by quoting just the key part of the article:

Russia is also a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which brings together China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan. Let's look at the [approximate number of Muslims](#) in the SCO countries: China 40'000'000, Kazakhstan 9'000'000,

Kyrgyzstan 5'000'000, Russia 10'000'000, Tajikistan 6'000'000 , Uzbekistan 26'000'000, India 180'000'000, Pakistan 195'000'000. That's a grand total of 471 million Muslims. Add to this figure the 75'000'000 Iranians which will join the SCO in the near future (bringing the grand total to 546'000'000) and you will see this stunning contrast: **while the West has more or less declared war on 1.8 billion Muslims, Russia has quietly forged an alliance with just over half a billion Muslims!** Russian nationalists (as opposed to Russian patriots) did try their best to infect Russia with her own brand of Islamophobia, but that movement was defeated by an absolutely uncompromising stance by Vladimir Putin himself who went as far as stating that: "I need to say that, as I have repeated many times before, from its beginning Russia had formed as a multiconfessional and multiethnic state. You are aware that we practice Eastern Christianity called Orthodoxy. And some theorists of religion say that Orthodoxy is in many ways closer to Islam than to Catholicism. I don't want to evaluate how true this statement is, but in general the coexistence of these main religions was carried out in Russia for many centuries. Over the centuries we have developed a specific culture of interaction, that might be somewhat forgotten in the last few decades. We should now recall those, our national roots."

By the way, this trend was also noted in the Alt-Right & Co. circles which then penned articles such as "[Putin May Look Like an Ethno-Nationalist, But He's Too Cozy With Russia's Muslim Minority](#)" I consider the entire Alt-Right movement a pure creation of the US Deep State and I consider most of what these folks claim to be counter-factual and illogical nonsense. But in this case, the author is *spot on* about Putin. He indeed is way too sophisticated to engage in ethno-nationalism. But what the author completely fails to realize are two basic facts:

1. *Russians are not, and have never been, ethno-nationalists*
2. *Putin is a pure product of Russia's history, he is not a fluke or an exception*

By the way, there are also Muslims out there who broke free from the Neocon narrative (the Takfiri narrative IS a Neocon-promoted narrative) and who now seek an alliance with countries like Russia. The best known Islamic leader who openly advocates this is, of course, my dear friend [Sheikh Imran Hosein](#). But he is not alone. In Russia Ramzan Kadyrov has embarked on the immense task of convincing his

fellow-Muslims that Takfirism is not Islam and that Russia can be the ideal protector of true Islam. Why? Russia is unique in several ways:

- *Russians don't fear Islam (even if they remember 12 wars against the Ottomans!)*
- *Most officials of the Russian security services are either atheists, or agnostics or Orthodox Christians (they are thus much harder to infiltrate with crazed jihadis)*
- *Most Russian Muslims are Sunni (Shia Muslims are the traditional #1 enemy of Takfiris, but this issue is more complicated in Sunni countries and communities).*
- *The kind of Islam practiced by Russian Muslims is very traditional and conservative, which is very much "in tune" with the rest of the (mainly "culturally Orthodox") Russian society.*

I believe that mix to be unique to Russia (please do correct me if I am wrong!) and that unique historical mix means that the Sunni community of Russia is the best protected (by the "almighty FSB" amongst others) and at the same time the least likely to be seduced by Takfiri theories!

As for the outlet which posted that article, I would simply note that it is

not a surprise for me to see such inanities posted by folks who run their donation campaigns with photos of Nazi soldiers...

In the past they censored my use of the word "Zionist". Now this: True, genuine, ethno-nationalism at its best, I suppose...

Russians typically hate all of that, especially Nazism. No wonder when you consider the price Russia paid for crushing about 80% of Hitler's forces (but not before the latter killed 27+ million Russians and declared us all to be "subhuman").

FEATURED



What We Are Doing At Russia Insider, and Why - Summer Fund Drive Appeal from the Editor

Charles Bausman 🔥 8,700 💬 313

Ethno-nationalism at its best...

Back to the real world now: the Kremlin is not naive about how much power and influence the AngloZionist Empire still has, especially over Takfiri terrorist groups. So next to this defense of traditional Islam, the Russians have also developed a tool to deal with BOTH influxes of illegal immigrants AND Takfiri terrorism: the Russian National Guard. In 2016 I wrote an article "[Putin creates a Russian National Guard](#)" in which I outlined the structure, function and purpose of the NGR (National Guard of Russia) and I won't repeat it all here except to give you a few figures of what units/subunits were used to form this internal security force:

- *Troops of the Interior Ministry (about 170'000 soldiers)*
- *Personnel from the Ministry of Emergency Situations*
- *The OMON riot police forces (about 40'000 soldiers)*
- *The SOBR rapid-reaction forces (about 5000+ soldiers)*
- *The Special Designation Center of the Operational Reaction Forces and Aviation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs including the Special Forces units "Zubr", "Rys" and "Iastreb" (about 700+ operators)*

In my 2016 article I added that "so we are talking of a total force of about 250'000 soldiers which will probably reach 300'000 in the near future". In fact, [the latest current figure](#) is 340'000!

Simply put, that is a force which CAN deal with any refugee crisis and "lock" the Russian border, especially with the help of the superbly trained 170'000 [Border Guards](#), bringing the total of highly trained professionals who can lock any segment of the Russian border to over HALF A MILLION (510,000 exactly)!

Just for perspective sake, the armed forces of France total only 302,700 personnel on active duty (including the Gendarmerie) backed by another 87'300 reservists and 17'000+ "deployed personnel" for a grand total of 407'000. And I won't even go into the training, equipment, rules of engagement, etc. issues.

So on one hand we have the West, in free fall since at least 2001, unable to even close its borders, never-mind protecting them. This same West wants to be White again and while it really ditched any pretense of Christianity decades ago, it finds it expedient to expand its hatred from "just immigrants" to Muslims and Islam in general.

Russia, on the other hand, currently with the most powerful military on the planet, AND one of the very best and most effective internal security forces (the FSB and the equally formidable [FSO](#)) still found it prudent to field a large and very powerful internal security force like the “*Federal National Guard Troops Service of the Russian Federation*” (full official name of the RNG).

Why is that? (that is also an important question!).

I will just mention in conclusion that Muslims form a large minority among Russian special forces, anti-terrorist forces, military police, etc. They are still often supervised by non-Muslims, but that is mostly for political reasons. If the non-Muslim Russian special forces (or anybody else) had real problems with Muslims, they would never agree to go into combat with them. The reality is the opposite. By the way, Czarist Russia had Muslim units, as did the Soviet Union (including the famous “Muslim Battalion” which participated in one of the most amazing operations in the history of special forces: the seizure of the Amin Palace in Kabul in 1979).

And now I will conclude with my last question for western “ethno-nationalists” and other islamophobes:

Are you sure you are strong enough to take on Russia AND China AND Iran AND the entire Muslim world? Considering your advanced state of decay (which Alt-Righters deplore, therefore also implicitly admit), do you really think that by declaring *urbi et orbi* that Islam is evil and a threat to your “way of life” (nevermind local converts to Islam, a rapidly growing segment of the population of the West) you are doing yourself or your country a favor? And beware of the [Dunning Kruger Effect](#) :-)

One thing is sure: Russia will never become an Alt-Right or otherwise Islamophobic country. So don't count on Russia to support you in your war against Islam.

The Saker

2019 Saker man of the year: Tulsi Gabbard and Donald Trump (runner up)

December 03, 2019



Dear friends,

As some of you know, once a year I like to pretend that the Saker blog is also some kind of wannabe Time Mag and I like to chose one (or several) “men” of the year. We are in December, so I am doing this again – this is a little silly, but still fun for me. But, before I begin, let me clearly state the following:

First, most importantly: no, this is ***NOT*** an endorsement of Tulsi Gabbard for the next Presidential election in 2020. **Not. An. Endorsement.** I promise!! Having made this caveat clear, let’s go for

The Saker “man” of the year: Tulsi Gabbard

In fact, I decided to choose Tulsi Gabbard, not for what she might or might not do during the rest of the campaign or should she ever make it into the White House (which I find impossible to imagine). I decided to choose her for what she ALREADY did. What do I have in mind?

First, Tulsi Gabbard is the only currently running US politician who has never lost her focus and never stopped repeating that imperial wars are bad and dangerous for the United States. Truly, there is no overstating the courage that took for her, especially considering the terminally out-of-touch-with-reality public discourse in the USA. In other words, Tulsi Gabbard is the only candidate which appears to care for the lives and well-being of US servicemen. The rest of them don't give a damn about people dying; US servicemen or those who defend their own land and who are murdered on a daily basis by the USA in a long list of "wars of choice" under the pretext of the "GWOT".

Second, Tulsi Gabbard is also the only currently running US politician who never attacked Trump by using the "stolen election" or "Russian interference" canards. That also takes a HUGE amount of courage: while the Democratic Party is going all out in an absolutely sickening, revolting, self-evidently stupid and profoundly evil campaign of attacks not only against Donald Trump the President, but against the Presidency as an institution (which they are trying to emasculate and subordinate to the Necon-controlled US Congress), Tulsi Gabbard did not engage in such attacks. Not only that, she agreed to travel to Syria on Donald Trump's request while the usual gang of rabid feminists were screaming "not my President!!" and [demonstrating disguised as female genitalia](#). In sharp contrast to these nutcases, she had the courage to show these hysterical harpies what a truly smart, strong willed, yet unapologetically feminine woman can do to at least try to change the world for the better. She knew that her trip to Damascus to meet President Assad was a very politically dangerous thing to do, yet she did it, when requested by a Republican President. I profoundly admire that.

[Sidebar: I admire women, especially when they show far more courage than men. In Russia I think of Natalia Poklonskaia, whom the Russian liberals hate with a burning passion, but who has shown much more courage and integrity than many Russian men, both as a Prosecutor in Crimea (men were terrified and would not accept the position) or since she became an outspoken Deputy in the State Duma (the only one to vote against the reactionary pension reform package the Russian government tried to sneak in during the summer). I also note that nowadays I see much more intelligence, courage, resilience and, above all, integrity from women than from men. It just seems that the 20th century has been terrible to men and their psychological health. Who knows, maybe we, men, collectively deserve feminism or the #metoo pandemic?...]

Third, I also admire Tulsi Gabbard simply for not breaking down under the ugly hate-campaign the liberal and democratic media has unleashed against her. Yes, Trump got it even worse, but she is #2 on the liberal hate list. When I read what the mainstream (putatively) “liberal” US press has to say about Gabbard, I can only imagine the kind of pressure the Neocons and their agents are putting on Gabbard behind the scenes.

That being said, I am acutely aware of her past failings and I already wrote about them [here](#) and [here](#). Yes, she also did cave in to the pressure of the powerful US Homo-lobby. But, when comparing Tulsi Gabbard’s failings and past slips, she appears far, far more consistent, honorable and courageous than all the other US politicians. So please, if you want to flame her for her past, shall we say, “unethical compromises with the truth”, then name me one other US politician with possibly more courage! Okay, Ron Paul certainly, Dennis Kucinich maybe, Mike Gravel probably. Oh and Ralph Nader, of course. But none of them are running in 2020 so, again, let’s compare the comparable.

And then, finally, there is the “no, not all” argument. Every time somebody makes a sweeping statement about how bad this or that US politician is, we can still point out at Tulsi Gabbard and say “no, not all”. I think that this function of the proverbial “righteous person saving a city” fully applies to Tulsi Gabbard, at least until now. And while I still hope not to be disappointed by her, I am not holding my breath on this one: the evil system ruling over the United States has always either crushed, or discredited or even murdered anybody who would represent a danger to it and there is no doubt that Gabbard is a potential danger for the US ruling classes. Just see [what she has to say](#) about her own, Democratic, party!

Because, and let’s be honest here, on paper Tulsi Gabbard would be the “dream candidate” for the Democratic Party: she is a multi-level minority (female, brown, Hindu, islander) combined with rock-solid “patriotic credentials” (compare her record with, say, Dukakis riding around in a tank!). She also happens to be very smart, good looking (in a truly feminine way!) and very articulate. What’s there not to like? Peace of course! She does not want wars, which is all the Dems stand for nowadays... True, the Bible-belt will never forgive (or even understand) her Hinduism and you can bet on a lot of fire and brimstone hysterics coming from Bible-thumping preachers if she ever gets the Dem nomination. But that is close to impossible anyway, so why worry about this?

Would she make a good President? Well, at the very least she won't be worse than what the US has had to endure since the Clintons came to the White House. But Saker "man" of the year? Yes, I think she does deserve this.

The runner up: Donald Trump

Okay, I think I have been very clear about my total disappointment with Donald Trump. In fact, my disappointment has now turned to outright disgust. And if you ask me to make a list of what I have against Trump, it would be a long one. And yet, we have to always keep things in perspective. The choice was Trump or Clinton. With Clinton we had "war for sure" (probably against Russia, starting with a suicidal attempt to impose US-run no-fly zone over Syria). With Trump our choice was "war maybe, but maybe not". And the fact that the US *almost* had a war with the DPRK, with Iran, with Syria (and, possibly, Russia!) and against Venezuela. And, let's be honest again, this still might happen. But at the time of writing (Dec 3rd) Trump did not authorize a war. He came close to it in Syria, but neither "almost" nor "close to" are equivalent to "did it".

Truly, the issue of war and peace remains the single most important issue the world is facing today. Why? Because of an extraordinarily toxic and dangerous phenomenon: the willful ignorance by US decision makers of the reality of the multi-polar world being built jointly by Russia and China (with a great deal of support from many other key nations out there!). As Andrei Martyanov, Dmitry Orlov and myself have been ceaselessly repeating – if the USA enters a war with Russian and/or China, the US mainland will suffer devastating nuclear and even conventional strikes. Nothing compares to that disaster and, therefore, I submit that the vote for Trump was the only rational option.

And while Trump did betray many (most?) of his campaign promises, and while he showed himself to be a dishonorable, spineless, Neocon "bitch" (to use Gabbard's words about Trump lending US troops to the KSA), he did deliver on his most important promise: no war (at least so far). That is **absolutely huge** and just for that only reason, I feel that he ought to be recognized (well, not him, but this one action of his, really) as the 2019 Saker Man of the Year runner-up.

That's it. Now it's your turn.

Please let us know what you think of my choice and whom you would have nominated.

Kind regards

The Saker

Book review: Andrei Martyanov's "The (real) Revolution in Military Affairs"

December 05, 2019

Last year I reviewed Andrei Martyanov's book "[Losing Military Supremacy: the Myopia of American Strategic Planning](#)" for the Unz Review. In that book, Martyanov explained why the era of easy US victories over pretty much defenseless countries was over and what that meant for US force planners. This year it is my immense pleasure to review his latest book "[The \(real\) Revolution in Military Affairs](#)". Let me immediately say that you do not have to read the first book to greatly enjoy the second one, but I still do think that the best "combo" to get a full picture would be to read both books in the order they were published. Still, today I will review only the second book.

First, debunking the many US political science canards

Martyanov begins his book by debunking the so-called "Thucidides Trap" which [Foreign Policy summarized](#) as so: "*When one great power threatens to displace another, war is almost always the result — but it doesn't have to be*" (with a clear emphasis on the first part of the subtitle). Martyanov correctly calls this (typically "political science geeks") cliché as very dangerous and misleading. He then proceeds to debunk a who's who list of US political science cliches, including the latest one, the so-called "hybrid warfare". He speaks of "unnecessary and pseudo-scholastic confusion" and he adds that the current "Western think-tankdom" is "utterly unprepared" for the realities of modern warfare. As somebody who worked (during my college years) for several US think tanks in Washington DC, I can only agree. I also know for a fact that most think tanks will write anything, no matter how false, just to secure more funding (I even had colleague who worked in "respectable" think tanks laugh about the nonsense they were writing just to get more funding).

Furthermore, in most west European countries, what US think tanks write is considered as gospel, including by folks in important positions in the intelligence and military establishments. So when the latest US-canard comes out, say "hybrid warfare" everybody in Europe feels compelled to use that expression to appear semi-educated in military matters. That I have also seen myself, and many times.

Key thesis: western leaders, especially US decision makers, are out of touch with reality

According to Martyanov , western political leaders are living in a completely delusional pseudo-reality which has no connection to the real world whatsoever. I would remind those who will accuse Martyanov of being too harsh in his critique that no less than Karl Rove, the US political Uber-guru, candidly [admitted that](#) “*We’re an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you’re studying that reality — judiciously, as you will — we’ll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that’s how things will sort out. We’re history’s actors . . . and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do.*”

You could say that Martyanov’s entire effort is aimed at one specific goal: to wake up those US Americans who still care and who still have the minimum of critical intelligence left by laying out before them the reality of modern warfare in the 21st century, including against near-peer, peer and even superior adversaries (in 2019 this would only be Russia, but this is also changing very, very fast, and China has made immense progress in her military capabilities).

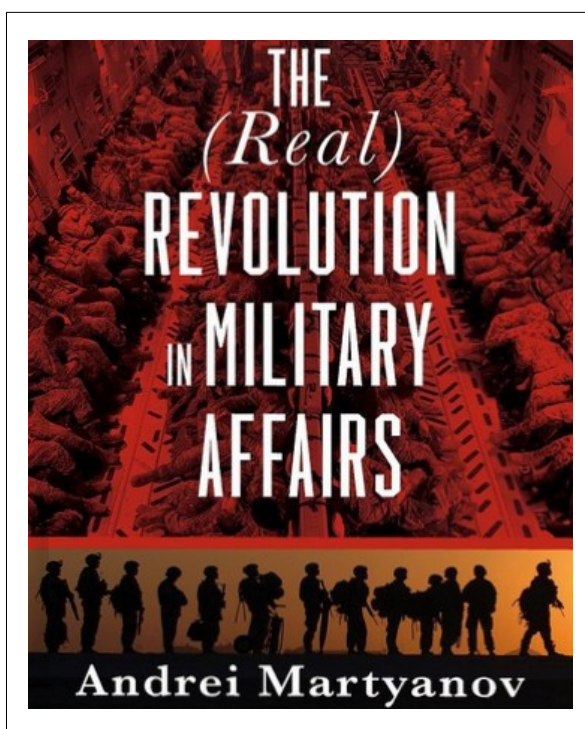
He begins by showing why political science models, which aim at assessing the global aggregate power of a society, the US, is deeply flawed and gives the western politicians and public a completely erroneous feeling of confidence, power and security. He then proceeds to contrast these models with something which I have not heard since my college years: the so-called “Osipov-Lanchester Laws” (well, since I was in a US college we called it only the “Lanchester equations” because western academia almost never mentions non-western authors or scientists). I won’t summarize the nature of these equations here, Wikipedia does a decent job [here](#), but I will mention that in our military force planning classes we used these (and other) equations to make all sorts of numerical models for attrition, front movement and even nuclear exchanges between superpowers (which, of course, did not use the early 20th century Osipov-Lanchester equations directly, but did use modern equations which have been developed by the US force planning community which were at least inspired by the type of methodology used by Osipov and Lanchester).

Let me immediately reassure the math-averse readers: Martyanov’s writing does not drag the reader through any complicated equations, he just uses a simplified version of these Osipov-Lanchester equations to show that modern warfare is a science which requires a minimum of technical/technological expertise to understand

and which has really nothing to do with meaningless political science buzzwords and over-hyped concepts like “A2/AD” or “hybrid warfare”, “network-centric warfare” or even “Revolution in Military Affairs”. The truth is that none of these concepts are new at all. They have existed for decades, and they are all buzzwords whose the primary function to make an otherwise clueless person appear “well-versed in the complex terminology of modern political science” or some other equally insipid purpose, like convincing clueless politicians to spend more money on “defense” thereby making it possible for the proponents of this kind of political science nonsense to fill their pockets with easily earned money.

Next, a crash course in modern warfare for beginners

The rest of the book is what I would call a ‘crash course in modern warfare for beginners’: Martyanov does an absolutely superb job explaining some (not all, of course!) features of modern warfare to a reader which is assumed to be only a curious amateur whose intellect can be persuaded by fact-based and logical arguments (as opposed to delusional, imperial hubris and feel-good flagwaving and self-worship). As a matter of fact, *Martyanov’s book could be an ideal “introduction to military analysis” or a “planning military forces 101” course.*



Martyanov is clearly deeply frustrated with the *willful* ignorance shown by a lot of US academics, politicians and other talking heads and he places the blame on the US educational system which, according to Martyanov, teaches nonsensical theories which are not just useless, but actually self-deceiving and outright dangerous. In all fairness to US colleges and academies, I think that Martyanov is just a little unfair: while it is true that most “political science” and other “conflict and peace studies” schools mostly teach nonsense, there are other US colleges and academies – both civilian and military –

which, at least in the 80s and 90s – did teach real military analysis and force planning. Those courses were typically taught by adjunct teachers taken from military personnel who taught evening classes while still working in their regular DoD positions. Furthermore, many students had a military rank (typically First Lieutenant and Captains). I don't know how good these schools are now, but in the 1980s-1990s some of these schools had superb curricula; - “heavy” on technical analysis and computer modeling. I can also say that most of the US officers I studied with were very competent specialists and honorable men who were all acutely aware that being an officer in a superpower's military, places upon you a double burden: that to protect your country by deterrence, but also to avoid a conflict at almost any cost because this is the only way to really protect your country!

By the way, at that time a senior officer of the DoD's [Office of Net Assessment](#) openly told us “*no US President will ever sacrifice Boston or Chicago for the sake of Berlin or Paris; but we will never admit that publicly*“. In my experience, US Cold War officers were very competent, cautious and acutely aware of the immense responsibility placed upon their shoulders. Furthermore, I will say this: during the Cold War both the USSR and the USA acted responsibly, even during major crises. Finally, in spite of Reagan's (stillborn) idea of “Star Wars” aka “SDI” – I never met a single US officer who believed, even for a second, that the US could ever stop a Soviet retaliatory second strike (nevermind a first one!).

During the Cold War – deterrence worked and both sides played by the same rulebook. This is not the case anymore, and that is very frightening.

Likewise, while the official USN posture was that it needed [600 ships](#) to then “forward deploy” and “bring the war to the Soviets” (by, for example, striking the Kola Peninsula). Yet, all the USN officers whom I met and who served on US carriers told us that this was all propaganda and that due to the “extreme” missile threat from Soviet Bears, Backfires and Oscar-class SSGNs the navy would immediately pull back **south** of the so-called [GIUK Gap](#). Keep in mind that this was long **before** the advent of long range hypersonic anti-ship missiles!

At the time (late 1980s) what I typically saw in US military oriented schools was very competent military specialists who, when indeed, did give the obligatory lip-service to the official flag waving propaganda, but who never, not for one second, took all that silly propaganda seriously. Not one. As for the folks whom these military specialists typically called “political science geeks” – nobody ever took them seriously

and there was a great deal of dislike between the political science departments faculty and students and the “security studies” or “national security studies” schools (a lot of proto-Neocons amongst these political science geeks, by the way).

Is that still true today? I don't know, but my fear is that the Neocons have gutted DoD from its most competent specialists, leaving only “political generals” (really political clowns *à la* General “Betrayus” whom [Admiral Fallon openly called an](#) “Ass-Kissing Little Chickenshit”). And, frankly, the (rather credible) rumor that General Jim Mattis aka “Maddog” was the (lone) voice of reason in the Spring of 2017 in Trump's otherwise wall-to-wall Neocon Cabinet is outright frightening. Especially since Mattis eventually was shown the door...

But the reality might be even worse.

What happens when the “third A” is gone

During one of these courses, I don't remember which one, I remember an officer telling us that the process of intelligence can be summarized by what he called the “three As”: acquisition, analysis and acceptance. The first ‘a’ is simply about getting the raw data by whatever means, technical or “human”. The next ‘a’ is the analysis of the obtained data by specialized folks who are supposed to be the experts in parsing and evaluating that data and its source, and then working on a readable summary to be presented to decision makers. The third ‘a’ is simply acceptance, or lack thereof, by the decision makers of the reports presented to them. Judging by the kind of language now used by almost all US politicians (except Ron Paul and Tulsi Gabbard and maybe a very few others), the process of intelligence in the USA appears to be completely broken, whether at the level of the first, second or third ‘a’ makes very little difference. Why?

Because speaking the truth about modern warfare or about the dismal state of the US armed forces is an instant “career killer” in the modern US political context. Anyone who breaks this taboo is instantly destroying his or her prospect of being heard, never-mind listened to. In the modern political culture the knee jerk response to any such “crimethink” is a typical combination of accusation of “anti-Americanism” or “lack of patriotism” or some other *ad hominem* which skillfully avoids any discussion of the **actual** reality of the topic being discussed. So let me address this attitude frontally and state the following:

I strongly believe that any US American who loves his/her country should carefully read BOTH of Martyanov's books!

Furthermore, far from being anti-US, Martyanov's books represent a herculean effort to try to wake up the comatose US public about the reality of modern warfare and to show that a continuation of the flagwaving delusional imperial hubris which is so pervasive in the US political discourse could lead to an absolute disaster: a full-scale war between Russia and the USA, China and the USA or, even worse, Russia and China against the USA. And that is a war which, for the first time in history, will devastate the US mainland with both conventional and even nuclear weapons.

Finally, if you really could never wrap your head around the new Russian weapons announced by Putin in his now famous speech, you can also think of Martyanov's book as a study-guide for curious civilians in which he will explain not only what these weapons can do, but what their introduction into the Russian armed forces really means for the USA.

With this book, you will get your third 'a' back again

The biggest benefit from Martyanov's two books is that they give you, the reader, all three As: you are presented with the real-world "hard" data about what new weapon systems and tactics of the 21st century are, then Martyanov presents you with a simple but extremely convincing analysis of what all that data means and, finally, Martyanov spells out why all this is crucial for every US citizens who wants his or her country to be peaceful and prosperous. As such, I can only repeat that I consider [both of Martyanov's books](#) as a "must read" for any member of the Saker Community or for anybody wanting to understand the real nature of the current Revolution in Military Affairs unfolding before our eyes.

The book is very well written and pretty short (193 pages). My only regret is the very poor index at the end (such a seminal book really ought to have a full index).

This is a great read and I urge you all to get a copy of this book.

The Saker

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1990. He took part in the events in the Caucasus which led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. In mid-1990s he moved to the United States where he currently works as Laboratory Director in a commercial aerospace group. He is a frequent blogger on the [US Naval Institute Blog](#). He also blogs at [Reminiscence of the Future...](#)

Autopsy of the Minsk Agreements

December 18, 2019

The recent Paris summit and the few days following the summit have brought a lot of clarity about the future of the Minsk Agreements. Short version: Kiev has officially rejected them (by rejecting both the sequence of steps and several crucial steps). For those interested, let's look a little further.

First, what just happened

First, here are the key excerpts from the Paris Conference and from statements made by “Ze” and his superior, Arsen Avakov right after their return to Kiev:

Paris Conference statement: [source](#)

*The Minsk agreements (Minsk Protocol of 5 September 2014, Minsk Memorandum of 19 September 2014 and the Minsk Package of Measures of 12 February 2015) continue to be the basis of the work of the Normandy format whose member states are committed to their **full implementation** (...) The sides express interest in agreeing within the Normandy format (N4) and the Trilateral Contact Group on all the legal aspects of the Special Order of Local Self-Government – special status – of Certain Areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk Regions – as outlined in the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements from 2015 – in order to ensure its functioning on a permanent basis .They consider it necessary to incorporate the “Steinmeier formula” into the Ukrainian legislation, in accordance with the version agreed upon within the N4 and the Trilateral Contact Group.*

President ‘Ze’ statement on Ukrainian TV: (unofficial, in-house, translation) [source](#)

“The most difficult question is the question of the transfer of the border control to Ukraine. It’s very funny, because it’s our border and the transfer of the control to us. But, it’s a weak sport, the Achilles’ heel of the Minsk Agreement.” “It’s what was signed by us, unfortunately. We can discuss this for a very long time. Possibly, the conditions were as such.” “But we signed that we will get the control over our border only after the elections on the temporarily occupied territories.” “We dedicated a very long time to this

question, we discussed it in details, **we have a very different positions with the president of Russia.**” “But this is the Minsk position, we have to understand this. I only like one thing, that we started talking about this. We agreed that we will continue talking about this in details and with the different variations during our next meeting.” “This is also a victory, because we will have a meeting in four months.”

Q. What do you think, is it possible to change the Minsk Agreement?

“This will be very difficult to do, **but we have to do it. We have to change it.** First, we have to understand that it’s been over four years since the Minsk Agreement was signed. Everything changes in our life. We have to understand that it wasn’t my team that signed the Minsk Agreement, but we as a power have to fulfill the conditions that our power at the time agreed back then. But? I am sure that some things we will be able to change. We will be changing them.” “Because **the transfer of the Ukraine’s border after our control only after the elections, – it’s not our position. I said about this don’t know how many times, but this is the final decision.**”

Arsen Avakov’s statement on Ukrainian TV: (unofficial, in-house, translation): [source](#)

“The philosophy of the border control... the part of the border that we don’t have control over is 408 kilometers. It’s not that easy to take it over, to equip it, even to get there across the enemy territories. It’s a procedure. As a compromise, we offered the following scheme: we will start taking the border under our control starting with the New Year, little by little, reducing the length of the border that is not controlled by us, and a day before the local election we will close the border, we will close this bottleneck. And this way will get the control over the border. Why isn’t this a good compromise? Considering, that at the same time according to the Steinmeier Formula, they have to disarm all the illegal armed formations of this pseudo-state DNR. This is how we see the compromise.”

In other words, both the official President and real President of the Ukraine agree: the Ukraine will not implement the Minsk Agreements as written, made law by the UNSC and clarified by the so-called Steinmeier Formula.

Ukrainian propagandists on Russian TV (yes, Ukronazi and hardline nationalist propagandists do get air time on Russian TV on a daily basis – for an explanation why, see [here](#) and [here](#)) went into damage control mode and explained it all away by saying

“these are only words, what matters is what Zelenskii signed in Paris“. They are wrong. First of all, statements made in their official capacity by the President or the Minister of Internal Affairs do represent OFFICIAL policy statements. Second, this explanation completely overlooks the reason why Ze and Avakov said these things. That reason is very simple: Ze caved in to the Ukronazis, completely. He now uses EXACTLY the same rhetoric as Poroshenko did, in spite of the fact that the only reason he was elected is that he presented himself as the ultimate anti-Poroshenko. Now all we see is Poroshenko 2.0.

So in the behind-the-scenes (but very real) struggle between the Zionist camp (Kolomoiskii and Zelenskii) and the Urkonazi camp (Avakov and Poroshenko), the latter have successfully taken control of the former and now the chances for saving a unitary Ukraine are down to, maybe not quite zero, but to something like 0.0000001% (I leave that one under the heading “never say never” and because I have been wrong in the past).

So what happens next?

That is the interesting question. In theory, the Normandy Four will meet again in 4 months. But that assumes that some progress was made. Well, it is possible that in a few sections of the line of contact there will be an OSCE supervised withdrawal of forces. But, let’s be honest here, the people have seen many, many such promised withdrawals, and they all turned out to be fake. Either the Ukronazis return to the neutral zone (claiming huge victories over the (sic) “Russian armed force”), or they resume bombing civilians, or they never even bother to change position. Any withdrawal is a good thing if it can save a single life! But no amount of withdrawals will settle anything in this conflict.

Second, there are A LOT of Ukrainian politicians who now say that the citizens of the LDNR have to “return” to Russia if they don’t like the Urkonazi coup or its ideology. They either don’t realize, or don’t care, that there are very few Russian volunteers in Novorussia and that the vast majority of the men and women who compose the LDNR forces are locals. These locals, by the way, get the Ukie message loud and clear: you better get away while you can, because when we show up you will all be prosecuted for terrorism and aiding terrorists, that is ALSO something the Ukronazis like to repeat day after day. By the way, while in Banderastan all Russian TV channels are censored, and while they also try to censor the Russian language Internet, in Novorussia all the Ukrainian (and Russian) TV stations are freely available. So as

soon as some Nazi freak comes out and says something crazy like “we will create filtration camps” (aka concentration camps) this news is instantly repeated all over Novorussia, which only strengthens the resolve of the people of the LDNR to fight to their death rather than accept a Nazi occupation..

I said it many times, Zelenskii’s ONLY chance was to crackdown on the Nazis as soon as he was elected. He either did not have the courage to do so, or his U.S. bosses told him to leave them unmolested. Whatever the case may be, it’s now over, we are back to square one.

The most likely scenario is a “slow freezing” of the conflict meaning now that Kiev has officially and overtly rejected the Minsk Agreements, there will be some minor, pretend-negotiations, maybe, but that fundamentally the conflict will be frozen.

That will be the last nail in the coffin of the pro-EU, pro-NATO so-called “Independent Ukraine”, since the most important condition to try to salvage the Ukrainian economy, namely peace, is now gone. Furthermore, the political climate in the Ukraine will further deteriorate (the hated Nazi minority + an even worse economic crisis are a perfect recipe for disaster).

For the Novorussians, it’s now clear: the rump-Ukraine* does not want them, nor will Kiev ever agree to the Minsk Agreement. That means that the LDNR will separate from the rump-Ukraine and, on time, rejoin Russia. Good bye Banderites and Ukronazis!

The rump-Ukraine will eventually break-up further: Crimea truly was the “jewel of the Black Sea” and its future appears to be extremely bright while the Donbass was the biggest source of raw materials, energy, industry, high-tech, etc. etc. etc.). What is left of the Ukraine is either poor and under-developed (the West) or needs to reopen economic ties with Russia (the South).

Besides, Zelenskii and his party are now trying to rush a new law through the Rada which will allow the sale of Ukrainian land to private interests (aka foreign interests + a local frontman). As a result, there is now a new “maidan” brewing, pitting Iulia Timoshenko and other nationalist leaders against Zelenskii and his party. This could become a major crisis very fast, especially now that it appears that **Zelenskii will also renege on this promise to call for a national referendum on the issue of the sale/privatization of land.**

As for the Russians, they already realize that Ze is a joke, unsurprisingly so since he is a comic by trade, and that the Ukrainians are “not agreement capable”. They will treat him like they did Poroshenko in the last years: completely ignore him and not even take his telephone calls. Right now, there is just a tiny bit of good will left in Moscow, but it is drying up so fast that it will soon totally disappear. Besides, the Russians really don't care that much anymore: the sanctions turned out to be a blessing, time is on Russia's side, the Ukronazis are destroying their own state and, finally, the important stuff for Russia is happening in Asia, not the West.

The Europeans will take a long time to come to terms with two simple facts:

1. Russia was never a party to this conflict (if she had, it would have been over long ago).
2. The Ukronazis are the ones who won't implement the Minsk Agreements

This means that the politicians who were behind the EU's backing of the Euromaidan (Merkel) will have to go before their successors can say that, oops, we got our colors confused, and white is actually black and black turned out to be white. That's okay, politicians are pretty good at that. The honeymoon between Kiev and Warsaw on the one hand and Berlin on the other will soon end as bad times are ahead.

Macron looks much better, and he will probably pursue his efforts to restore semi-normal relations with Russia, for France's sake first, but also eventually the rest of the EU. The Poles and the Balts will accuse him of “treason” and he will just ignore them.

As for Trump, he will most likely make small steps towards Russia, but most of his energy will be directed either inwards (impeachment) or outwards (Israel), but not towards the Ukrainian conflict. Good.

Conclusion

It's over. Crimea and the Donbass are gone forever, the first is *de jure*, the latter merely *de facto*. The rump-Ukraine is completely unconformable (barring some kind of coup followed by a government of national unity supported Moscow – I consider this hypothesis as highly unlikely).

If you live in the West, don't expect your national media to report on any of this. They will be the LAST ones to actually admit it (journos have a longer shelf life than politicians, it is harder for them to make a 180).

The Saker

PS: to get a feeling for the kind of silly stunts the “Ze team” is now busying itself with, just check this one: they actually tried to falsify the Ukrainian version of the Paris Communique. For details, see Scott’s report here: <https://thesaker.is/kiev-attempted-to-change-the-letter-and-meaning-of-paris-summit-communique/>. If the Ukraine was a Kindergarten, then “Ze” would be a perfect classroom teacher or visiting entertainer. But for a country fighting for its survival, such stunts are a very, very bad sign indeed!

(*rump-Ukraine: In broad terms, a “rump” state is what remains of a state when a portion is carved away. Expanding on the “butcher” metaphor, the rump is what is left when the higher-value cuts such as rib roast and loin have been removed.)

Is there a future for Russian aircraft carriers?

December 26, 2019

Those following the news from Russia have probably heard that Russia's only aircraft carrier, the Admiral Kuznetsov (official name: Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union Kuznetsov), was put into dry dock for major repairs and retrofits. Things did not go well. First, the dry dock sank (it was Russia's biggest) and then a huge crane came crashing down on the deck. And just to make it even worse, a fire broke out on the ship killing 2 and injuring more. With each setback, many observers questioned the wisdom of pouring huge sums of money into additional repairs when just the scheduled ones would cost a lot of money and take a lot of time.

Actually, the damage from the fire was not as bad as expected. The damage from the crane was, well, manageable. But the loss of the only huge floating dry dock is a real issue: the Kuznetsov cannot be repaired elsewhere and these docks cost a fortune.

But that is not the real problem.

The real problem is that there are major doubts amongst Russian specialists as to whether Russia needs ANY aircraft carriers at all.

How did we get here?

A quick look into the past

During the Soviet era, US aircraft carriers were (correctly) seen as an instrument of imperial aggression. Since the USSR was supposed to be peaceful (which, compared to the USA she was, compared to Lichtenstein, maybe less so) why would she need aircraft carriers? Furthermore, it is illegal to transit from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean through the Bosphorus with an aircraft carrier and yet the only shipyard in the USSR which could build such a huge ship was in Nikolaev, on the Black Sea. Finally, the Soviets were acutely aware of how vulnerable US aircraft carriers are to missile attacks, so why build such an expensive target, especially considering that the Soviet Union had no AWACS (only comparatively slow, small and much less capable early warning helicopters) and no equivalents to the F-14/F-18 (only the frankly disappointing and short range Yak-38s which would be very easy prey for US aircraft).

Eventually, the Soviets did solve these issues, somewhat. First, they created a new class of warships, the “heavy aircraft carrying cruiser”: under the flight deck, these Soviet aircraft carriers also held powerful anti-ship missiles (however, this was done at the cost of capacity under the deck: a smaller wing and smaller stores). Now, they could legally exit the Black Sea. Next, they designed a very different main mission for their “heavy aircraft carrying cruiser”: to extend the range of Russian air defenses, especially around so called “bastion” areas where Russian SSBNs used to patrol (near the Russian shores, say the Sea of Okhotsk or the northern Seas). So while the Soviet heavy aircraft carrying cruiser were protecting Russian subs, they themselves were protected by shore based naval aviation assets. Finally, they created special naval variants for their formidable MiG-29s and Su-27s. As for the AWACS problem, they did nothing about it at all (besides some plans on paper). The collapse of the USSR only made things worse.

The Soviets also had plans for a bigger, nuclear, aircraft carriers, and on paper they looked credible, but they never made it into production. These supposed “super carriers” would also come with a truly “super” price...

So how good was/is the Kuznetsov?

Well, we will probably never find out. What is certain, however, is that she is no match for the powerful U.S. carriers, even their old ones, and that the USA has always been so far ahead of the USSR or Russia in terms of carriers and carrier aviation that catching up was never a viable option, especially not when so many truly urgent programs needed major funding. Did the Kuznetsov extend the range of Russian air defenses? Yes, but this begs the question of identity of the “likely adversary”. Not the USA: attacking Russian SSBNs would mean total war, and the U.S. would be obliterated in a few short hours (as would Russia). I don’t see any scenario in which US ASuW/ASW assets would be looking for Russian SSBNs anywhere near the Russian coasts anyway, this would be suicidal. What about smaller countries? This is where the rationalizations become really silly. One Russian (pretend) specialist even [suggested](#) the following scenario: the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt takes power, thousands of Russian tourists are arrested and the Islamists demand that Russia give full sovereignty over to all Muslim regions of Russia, if not: then hundreds of Russians will get their throats slit on Egyptian TV. Can you guess how an aircraft carrier would help in this situation?

Well, according to this nutcase, the Russian carrier would position itself off the Egyptian coast, then the Russians would send their (pretty small!) air-wing to “suppress Egyptian air defenses” and then the entire Pskov Airborne Division would be somehow (how?!?!?) be airlifted to Egypt to deal with the *Ikhwan* and free the Russian hostages.

It makes me wonder what this specialist was smoking!

Not only does it appear that the Egyptians are currently in negotiations with Moscow to acquire 24+ brand new Su-35s (which can eat the Russian airborne aircraft for breakfast and remain hungry for more), but even without these advanced multi-role & air superiority fighters the rest of the [Egyptian air defenses](#) would be a formidable threat for the relatively old and small (approx.: 18x Su-33; 6x MiG-29K; 4x Ka-31; 2x Ka-27) Russian airwing. As for airlifting the entire 76th Guards Air Assault Division – Russia simply does not have the kind of transport capabilities to allow it to do that (not to mention that Airborne/Air Assault divisions are NOT trained to wage a major counterinsurgency war by themselves, in a large and distant country). Theories like these smack more of some Russian version of a Hollywood film than of the plans of the General Staff of Russia.

Back to the real world now

Frankly, the Kuznetsov was a pretty decent ship, especially considering its rather controversial design and the appalling lack of maintenance. She did play an important role in Syria, not thanks to her airwing, but to her powerful radars. But now, I think that it is time to let the Kuznetsov sail into history: pouring more money in this clearly antiquated ship makes no sense whatsoever.

What about new, modern, aircraft carriers?

The short answer is: how can I declare that the USN has no rational use left for its aircraft carriers and also say that the Russian case is different and that Russia does need one or perhaps several such carriers? The USN is still several decades ahead of modern Russia in carrier operations, and (relatively) poor and (comparatively) backward Russia (in naval terms) is going to do better? I don't think so.

Then, there is one argument which, in my opinion, is completely overlooked: while it is probably true that a future naval version of the Su-57s (Su-57K?) would be more than a match for any US aircraft, including the flying brick also known as F-35, Russia

STILL has nothing close to the aging but still very effective carrier-capable USN Northrop Grumman E-2 Hawkeye. Yes, Russians have excellent radars and excellent airframes, but it is one thing to have the basic capabilities and quite another to effectively integrate them. As always, for Russia, there is the issue of cost. Would it make sense to finance an entire line of extremely costly aircraft for one (or even a few) aircraft carriers?

We need to keep in mind that while Russia leads the world in missile technology (including anti-shipping missiles!), there are many countries nowadays who have rather powerful anti-ship missiles too, and not all are so friendly to Russia (some may be at present, but might change their stance in the future). Unless Russia makes a major move to dramatically beef-up her current capabilities to protect a high-value and very vulnerable target like a hypothetical future aircraft carrier, she will face the exact same risks as all other countries with aircraft carriers currently do.

A quick look into the future

Hypersonic and long range missiles have changed the face of naval warfare forever and they have made aircraft carriers pretty much obsolete: if even during the Cold War the top of the line U.S. carriers were “sitting ducks”, imagine what any carrier is today? The old saying, “shooting fish in a barrel” comes to mind. Furthermore, what Russia needs most today are, in my opinion, more multi-role cruise missile and attack submarines SSN/SSGN (like the [Yasen](#)), more diesel-electric attack submarines SSK (like the [Petrovavlovsk-Kamchatsky](#)), more advanced patrol boats/frigates (like the [Admiral Kasatonov](#)), more small missile ships/corvettes (like the [Karakurt](#)), more large assault ships (like the [Petr Morgunov](#)) and many, many, more.

As for aircraft carriers, they are not needed any more to extend the (already formidable) Russian air defenses and in the power-projection role (operations far from Russia), the Russian Navy does not have the capabilities to protect any carrier far away from home shores.

Which leaves only three possible roles:

- 1) “Showing the flag”, i.e. make port calls to show that Russia is as “strong” and “advanced” as the US Navy. Two problems with that: i) the USN is decades ahead of Russia in carrier operations and 2) there are MUCH cheaper way to show your muscle (the Tu-160 does a great job of that).

2) “Retaining the carrier know-how”. But for what purpose? What naval strategy? What mission? Russia is the nation that made aircraft carriers obsolete – why should she ignore her own force planning triumphs?

3) Prestige and \$\$\$ allocation to select individuals and organizations within and next to the Russian Navy. Since Russia does not have a money-printing-press or criminally bloated budgets, she simply cannot afford the capital outlay either for the Russian Navy, or for the nation of Russia, just to fill the pockets of some interested parties.

Conclusion:

If I have missed something, please correct me. I don’t see any role for carriers in the future Russian Navy. That is not to say that I am sure that they won’t be built (there are constant rumors about future Russian “super” carriers, no less!), but if they are built, I believe that it will be for all the wrong reasons.

The plight of the Kuznetsov might be blessing for Russia. She was a good ship (all in all), but now she should be viewed as an object lesson to (hopefully) kill any plans to build more carriers for the Russian Navy.

The Saker

Russia and the USA both finish the year with a “Grand Finale” of sorts

January 01, 2020

The end of the year is often a time of relative calm when the various parties to a conflict take a moment off, even when they declare nothing of the sort publicly (there are, of course, exceptions to this rule of thumb, such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979). This year, both the Russians and the USA ended the year in a climax of sorts which we shall look into.

Another rule of thumb says that, “*past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior*”, and this turned out to be very true in both cases: the Russians did more of what they have done all year long, as did the Americans. Specifically:

- Uncle Shmuel decided to bomb five bases of the group Kata’ib Hizbullah in Iraq in retaliation for an attack on the K1 U.S. base in Iraq
- Defense Minister Shoigu announced that the first regiment of [Avangard](#) equipped ICBMs was fully operational and on combat alert.

Let’s take a look at the implications and consequences of these two events.

The U.S. airstrikes on Kata’ib Hizbullah units in Iraq

First, just to clarify, Kata’ib Hizbullah has nothing to do with Hezbollah in Lebanon. The word “Hezbollah/Hizbullah” simply means “party of God” and Kata’ib Hizbullah simply means “Brigades of the Party of God”. Yes, both groups have similar names and they are both Shia. Kata’ib Hizbullah probably aims at becoming an Iraqi version of Hezbollah, and while they even have a similar flag, Kata’ib Hizbullah is neither an offshoot nor creation of Hezbollah. Kata’ib Hizbullah was created as a direct response to the U.S. invasion of Iraq (whereas Hezbollah in Lebanon was blow-back from the Israeli invasion of Lebanon).

This being said, there is no doubt in my mind that the U.S. actions in the Middle-East, and especially the total and abject subservience of the USA to Israel (and when I say “subservience” I am being polite, really) have greatly contributed to facilitating the alliance and cooperation of all Shia factions in the Middle-East. The best example of such cooperation is the support the Yemeni Houthis get from Iran (but “support” is

not the same as “proxy”, and Iran had nothing to do with the devastating Houthis counter-strikes against the KSA).

I won't go into the details of the recent strike, especially since “b” on Moon of Alabama already has done a [very good job analyzing it](#). What I will do is simply suggest an answer to the rhetorical question “b” asks at the end of his analysis: “Yesterday's attacks guarantee that all U.S. troops will have to leave Iraq and will thereby also lose their supply lines to Syria. One wonders if that was the real intent of those strikes”.

My personal opinion is that Occam's razor and past events ought to suggest that the most straightforward explanation is much more plausible than any kind of “5d chess” strategy.

Furthermore, far from suggesting that this latest expression of the hatred of the Iraqi people for Uncle Shmuel will result in a withdrawal, we already see the exact opposite happening: not only has the USA announced that it will send [another 750 soldiers to Iraq](#), but it has also announced that [another 4'000 troops might also be sent to the region](#), to the immense joy of its Israeli overlords who can't wait for a US attack on Iran (how nice that the “only democracy in the Middle-East” is always cheering for as much violence and wars as possible).

Does that look like a preparation for withdrawal to you?

Finally, there is also Donald The Great with his usual garden variety of empty threats like this wonderful tweet:

....Iran will be held fully responsible for lives lost, or damage incurred, at any of our facilities. They will pay a very BIG PRICE! This is not a Warning, it is a Threat. Happy New Year!

— Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [December 31, 2019](#)

And, sure enough, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei quickly replied:

If the Islamic Republic decides to challenge & fight, it will do so unequivocally. We're not after wars, but we strongly defend the Iranian nation's interests, dignity, & glory.

If anyone threatens that, we will unhesitatingly confront & strike them.

— Khamenei.ir (@khamenei_ir) [January 1, 2020](#)

and

That guy has tweeted that we see Iran responsible for the events in Baghdad & we will respond to Iran.

1st: You can't do anything.

2nd: If you were logical —which you're not— you'd see that your crimes in Iraq, Afghanistan... have made nations hate you.

<https://t.co/hMGOEDwHuY>

— Khamenei.ir (@khamenei_ir) [January 1, 2020](#)

It sure doesn't look like anybody in Tehran is taking Trump, or the US, seriously.

And, frankly, why would they?

As Ayatollah Ali Khamenei correctly pointed out – there is nothing much the US **can** do about what is taking place all over the Middle-East; except, of course, starting a war which the US will most definitely lose (Hollywood inspired delusions of invincibility notwithstanding).

I believe that the U.S. Deep State has no intentions at all of leaving Iraq (or Syria, for that matter). Furthermore, far from being a strike to justify a withdrawal, this strike was aimed at bullying the Iraqi people into submission and acceptance of the lawless and thug-like behavior of the USA in their country. Simply put, Pompeo & Co. did what Uncle Shmuel always does when they do not know what to do: they crudely decided to use brute force with the goal of terrorizing their adversaries into submission.

You might object that this strategy has not worked in decades, and you would be right. But here is the catch: the weaker the AngloZionist Empire looks, the more the Empire feels that it ought to restore its putative ability to terrorize by doubling-down, again and again. This mental block is called, “*la fuite en avant*” in French, which can be translated as a *flight forward*: that is what you do when all you can do is what got you into serious trouble in the first place, because:

1. It did work in the past.
2. You don't have the intellectual capability to imagine any other approach.

3. Because you sincerely believe that violence always solves all problems (as in the German saying “*Wenn es mit Gewalt nicht geht, dann geht es mit mehr Gewalt*”)

Those familiar with Hegelian dialectics will immediately see what is happening; the Empire is being destroyed from within, as a result of its own internal contradictions and its inability to evolve to a higher level of functioning. This inherent corrosiveness within the Empire does not require an external enemy, it destroys itself due to its very nature.

There are rumors that [Trump wants to get rid of Pompeo](#), but I don't believe them. Assuming that these rumors are true in the first place, are they linked to the recent air strikes or is this an expression of Trump's comparative benevolence? Again, I doubt it. [Trump is already blaming Iran](#) for the fact that [the US embassy in Iraq was attacked by large crowds of US-hating Iraqis](#).

Finally, and just as pathologically dysfunctional, is the fact that the only “solution” the leaders of the Empire could devise to the current crisis is to send in *even more* forces to reinforce the huge embassy compound in Baghdad. Obviously, Uncle Shmuel can't even begin to imagine a strategy not solely predicated on violence.

This clearly shows that the expression, “*insanity is repeating the same thing over and over again expecting different results*” still fully applies to the rulers of the USA.

Now let's take a look at how Russia ended the year

Russia deploys the Avangard (and more)

Remember how after Putin's famous speech, the so-called “Russia specialists” declared that all these weapons did not exist, that they were all just computer animations?

Well, now probably the most exotic and “incredible” weapon mentioned by Putin (the Avangard) is [fully operational and on combat duty](#). The Russians went so far as to [show that weapon to US inspectors](#). Still, there remains a tiny minority which do not believe the “Russian hype”, despite an [unambiguous report by the GAO](#) which clearly states that “*There are no existing counter-measures*” against hypersonic weapons, and who will only admit the existence of these weapon systems if they get vaporized by them. But what do these Russian weapons (especially the Mach 10+ Kinzhal and the [Mach 27+ Avangard](#)) mean for the rest of us?

On one hand, this is very good news because it is yet another sign that Russia is now fully prepared for war, including total nuclear war. To put it differently, ***all the hopes that the U.S. had regarding the development of an ABM system which could stop a Russian counter-strike (following a U.S. attack) are now gone.*** Not only have the new Russian weapons made the US carrier fleet obsolete, it also made the US ABM plans obsolete too. Thus, in theory, this new reality ought to deter even the craziest folks at the Pentagon, CIA, NSA and White House.

On the other hand, however, this is not good news, because now the U.S. has a factual basis to declare that it feels threatened. Why? Because of the tricky issue of first-strike stability.

I can state categorically that Russia will never deliberately start a war, least of all against the USA (the Russians understand that Russia could never escape a US counter-strike, even if delivered by the comparatively old US nuclear triad), but ***that is not an assumption the Pentagon's force planners can make.*** Simply put, the Avangard + [Burevestnik](#) (nuclear powered infinite range cruise missile) combo could seem rather destabilizing from the point of view of what is called [first strike stability](#) (for a detailed discussion see [here](#)). For the time being, only one ICBM regiment has been outfitted with the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicles while the Burevestnik is still in the late stages of testing. But we also know that three more regiments are scheduled to receive the Avangard in the near future while the testing and evaluation of the Burevestnik is near completion (in spite of a possible recent accident). Once ready, this missile will probably be deployed in large numbers. Right now ***U.S. defense planners will have to assume that both systems will be deployed in numbers sufficient to affect the first strike stability between Russia and the USA.***

The solution? To hammer out a new strategic arms treaty between the two countries. Alas, at this point in time, the U.S. leaders show no interest in any such treaty. Worse, [the New Start Treaty will soon lapse](#).

I suppose that in the demented political culture of the USA any kind of treaty with Russia is a “sign of weakness” and is therefore “unpatriotic”. Still, first strike stability is one of those things which, along with cooperation in space, self-evidently benefits ***both*** nations (not to mention the rest of the planet) and, therefore, almost any strategic arms limitation/reduction would be highly desirable (the one exception to this rule would be a dramatic reduction in the number of deliverable warheads, even by both

sides, which would threaten also first strike stability; see [here](#) and [here](#) for a discussion).

Finally, Russia ended the year by launching the newest [Yasen-M-class](#) SSN/SSGN, the Novosibirsk. This class of subs, arguably the most advanced on the planet, can function as both a nuclear attack and a missile attack submarine: it has eight torpedo tubes as well as ten vertical missile launch silos which can launch all sorts of missiles, including hypersonic ones. Most amazingly, it has only 64 crewmen, which suggest an unprecedented level of automation (the latest Virginia-class sub has a crew of 134). The Yasen-M is truly an amazing submarine, the big question now is how many of those Russia will be able to build? Probably not enough to really please the Russian force planners, but probably enough to create yet another major headache for the USN.

What is crucial to understand here is that the Avangard, the Yasen-M and all the other weapons systems Russia has deployed (the Avangards, Zirkons, Bastions, Sarmats, Pereswets, Burevestniks, Poseidons etc. are only the ones discussed in the western media, in reality there are many more) are but the tip of a much bigger iceberg: *for the past 5 years or so Russia has been preparing for total war precisely to try to deter the USA from doing something literally “terminally” stupid*. Will that be enough to shock the leaders of the AngloZionist Empire out of their delusions or grandeur and invincibility?

I honestly don't know. I hope that it will. But, frankly, I am not sure. Listening to the likes of Trump, Pompeo, Bolton and the rest of these ignorant and self-deluded clowns, not to mention the English language corporate media, I don't feel very reassured, to put it mildly. Let us pray that the *actual* deep-state decision makers can still discriminate between feel-good propaganda for the masses and the actual reality out there.

Conclusion: two diametrically opposed approaches to security

Trump is stuck in a position where he has no other choice but to continue to threaten anybody and everybody. This kind of manic aggression towards the entire planet is what passes for “looking presidential” in the current US political *doxa*. This, at least, is not Trump's fault and it all began a very long time ago (remember [Dukakis cruising around in a M-1 tank](#) or [Dubya landing on a carrier](#) with “Mission Accomplished” in the background?). Not that I am excusing Trump in any way: no

adult leader of a nuclear superpower should even think about issuing such silly but nonetheless most dangerous threats towards any other sovereign country, nevermind another nuclear superpower. But let's be honest here: every single US President starting with Clinton and all his successors was a clown of one kind or another and Trump is probably not the worst of them. As I have said many times, ***at this point the problem is not the man (or woman) in the White House, it is the entire system which is both terminally dysfunctional and unreformable.***

The year 2020 will be dominated by the (frankly treacherous) attempts of the Dems to subvert the US Constitution and overthrow Trump. Like many others, I predict that this will boomerang into the Dems collective face and will yield a landslide victory for Trump (the Democratic Party is at least as unreformable as the US political system). Externally, Trump will probably continue to simultaneously threaten the EU, Russia, China, Iran, Syria, North Korea, Yemen, Lebanon, Venezuela, Mexico, Turkey, etc. and the entire worldwide Muslim community (keep in mind [the following stats](#): there are about 2 billion Muslims out there, and make up a majority of the population in 49 countries around the world). Basically, the US believes that it can ***simultaneously*** threaten, sanction and otherwise bully (or even attack), most of the countries on the planet and prevail. To call this delusional is an understatement.

For Russia 2020 will be an ***important transition year***. This is best illustrated by the compromise deal reached with the EU and the Ukraine on gas: Russia yielded to some of the Ukrainian demands solely in order to show support for the EU which is now slowly showing signs of truly getting fed-up with the endless stream of threats and demands coming from across the Atlantic. You could say that Russia agreed to a tactical concession in order to secure a strategic objective.

The Germans and the French, in particular, seemed to have finally (!) realized that they gained nothing and lost a lot in their subservience to the USA . The Russian plan is quite simple, really: show the EU that Russia has more than enough force to smash any US/NATO/EU attacking force while, at the same time, indicating that Russia is more than willing to cooperate, and even compromise, to establish normal, civilized, relations with Europe. This being said, Russia will only agree to relatively minor compromises, simply because her real priorities, political and economic, are not in the West anymore, but in the South, North and East and, especially, China [quick reminder: [the top exports of Russia](#) are crude petroleum (\$96.6B), refined petroleum (\$58.4B), petroleum gas (\$19.8B), coal briquettes (\$16.1B) and wheat (\$7.93B); the top

export destinations of Russia are China (\$39.1B), the Netherlands (\$27.7B), Germany (\$19.9B), Belarus (\$18.5B) and the United States (\$15.4B).] Yes, the EU is still important to Russia, but not a top priority anymore.

How can all this be summed up?

Well, and paraphrasing a famous quote by Foreign Minister Lavrov, we could say that

- the US plan is to turn allies into friends, turn friends into partners, turn partners into neutrals and turn neutrals into enemies and
- the Russian plan is to turn enemies into neutrals, turn neutrals into partners, turn partners into friends and turn friends into allies.

I will let you decide which of these two plans is viable and which one is not.

I wish you all the best in 2020, especially peace.

The Saker

Section II – Orthodoxy

De-constructing Islamophobia

November 07, 2019

Introduction: a short survey of the cuckoo's nest

My initial idea was to begin with a definition of “Islamophobia” but after looking around for definitions, I decided to use my own, very primitive definition. I will define Islamophobia as the belief that Islam (the religion) and/or Muslims (the adherents to this religion) represent some kind of more or less coherent whole which is a threat to the West. These are two distinct arguments rolled up into one: the first part claims that Islam (the religion) represents some kind of threat to the West while the second part claims that the people who embrace Islam (Muslims) also represent some kind of threat to the West. Furthermore, this argument makes two crucial assumptions:

1. there is such thing out there as a (conceptually sufficient) unitary Islam
2. there are such people with (conceptually sufficient) common characteristics due to their adherence to Islam

Next, let's summarize the “evidence” typically presented in support of this thesis:

1. The god of Islam is not the same god as the God of Christianity
2. The Muslim world was created by the sword
3. The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, was an evil person
4. Islam is incompatible with western democracy and represents a threat to what are referred to as “values” in the modern day West
5. Muslims have treated Christians horribly in many different historical instances
6. Muslims often turn to terrorism and commit atrocities
7. Islam is socially regressive and seeks to impose medieval values on a modern world

There are more such as these, but these, I believe, are the main ones.

What is crucial here is to point out that this evidence relies both on theological arguments (#1 #4 #7), and historical arguments (#2 #3 #5 #6).

Finally, there is a most interesting phenomenon which, for the time being, we shall note, but only discuss later: the legacy corporate Ziomea on one hand denounces Islamophobia as a form of “racism” but yet, at the same time, the very same circles which denounce Islamophobia are also the ones which oppose all manifestations of real traditional Islam. This strongly suggests that the study of this apparent paradox can, if carefully analyzed, yield some most interesting results, but more about that later.

Of course, all of the above is sort of a “bird’s eye” view of Islamophobia in the West. Once we go down to the average Joe Sixpack level, all of the above is fused into one “forceful” slogan like this one:



This kind of crude fear mongering is targeted at the folks who don’t realize that the USA is not “America” and who, therefore, probably don’t have the foggiest notion of what Sharia law is or how it is adjudicated by Islamic courts.

[I have lived in the USA for a total of 22 years and have observed something very interesting: there is a unique mix of ignorance and fear which, in the USA, is perceived as “patriotic”. A good example of this kind of “patriotism through ignorance” is in the famous song “[Where Were You When the World Stopped Turning](#)” by Alan Jackson which includes the following words: “I watch CNN but I’m not sure I can tell you the difference in Iraq and Iran, but I know Jesus and I talk to God“. Truth be told, the same song also asked in reference to 9/11 “Did you burst out with pride for the red, white and blue?“. Why exactly the massacre of 9/11 should elicit patriotic pride is explained as follows “And the heroes who died just doin’ what they do?“. Thus when the “United American Committee” declares that Sharia law is a threat to

“America” the folks raised in this culture of fear and patriotism immediately “get it”. David Rovics hilariously described this mindset in his song “[Evening News](#)” where he says: “Evil men are plotting, to blow up Washington, DC, ‘cause they don’t like freedom and democracy, they’re fans of the Dark Ages, they are all around, they’re marching from the desert sands, and coming to your town“. I have had the fortune of visiting all the continents of our planet (except Oceania) and I can vouch that this blend of fear+patriotic fervor is something uniquely, well, not “American” but “USAnian”.]

Having quickly surveyed the Islamophobic mental scenery, we can now turn to a logical analysis of the so-called arguments of the Islamophobes.

Deconstructing the phobia’s assumptions: a unitary Islam

Let’s take the arguments one by one beginning with the argument of a unitary Islam.

Most of us are at least vaguely aware that there are different Islamic movements/schools/traditions in different countries. We have heard of Shias and Sunni, some have also heard about Alawites or Sufism. Some will even go so far as remembering that Muslim countries can be at war with each other, and that some Muslims (the Takfiris) only dream about killing as many other Muslims (who, obviously, don’t share the exact same beliefs) and that, in fact, movements like al-Qaeda, ISIS, etc have murdered other Muslims in huge numbers. So the empirical evidence strongly suggest that this notion of a Muslim or Islamic unity is factually simply wrong.

Furthermore, we need to ask the obvious question: what *is* Islam?

Now, contrary to the hallucinations of some especially dull individuals, I am not a Muslim. So what follows is my own, possibly mistaken, understanding of what “core Islam” is. It is the acceptance of the following formula “There is no god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God” or “*lā ’ilāha ’illā llāh muḥammadun rasūlu llā*“. Note that “Allah” is not a name, it is the word “God” and “*rasul*” can be translated as “prophet”. There are also the so-called Five Pillars of Islam:

- The *Shahada* or profession of faith “*There is no god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God*“
- The *Salat* or a specific set of daily prayers

- The *Zakat* or alms giving
- The *Sawm* or fasting
- The *Hadjj* or pilgrimage to Mecca

That's it! A person who fully embraces these five pillars is considered a Muslim. Or at least, so it would appear. The reality is, of course, much more complex. For the time being, I will just note that in this "core Islam" there is absolutely nothing, nothing at all, which could serve as evidence for any of the Islamophobic theories. Yes, yes, I know, I can already hear the Islamophobes' objections: you are ignoring all the bad stuff in the Quran, you are ignoring all the bad stuff about spreading Islam by the sword, you are ignoring all the bad things Muhammad did in his life, you are ignoring the many local traditions and all the normative examples of the tradition (*Sunnah* and its *Hadiths*). Yeah, except you can't have it both ways. You can't say:

1. Islam is inherently evil/dangerous AND
2. use local/idiosyncratic beliefs and actions to prove your point!

If Islam **by itself** is dangerous, then it has to be dangerous everywhere it shows up, irrespective of the region, people, time in history or anything else.

If we say that **sometimes** Islam is dangerous and sometimes it is not, then what we need to look into is not the core elements of the Islamic faith, but instead we need to identify those circumstances in which Islam was not a threat to anybody and those circumstances when Islam was a threat to others.

Furthermore, if your argument is really based on the thesis that Islam is evil always and everywhere, then to prove it wrong all I need to do is find one, just ONE, example where Muslims and non-Muslims have lived in peace together for some period of time.

[Sidebar: while I was working on my Master's Degree in Strategic Studies I had the fortune of having the possibility to take a couple of courses outside my field of specialization and I decided to take the most "exotic" course I could find in SAIS' curriculum and I chose a course on Sharia law. This was an excellent decision which I never regretted. Not only was the course fascinating, I had the chance of writing a term paper on the topic "The comparative status of Orthodox Christians in history under Muslim and Latin rule". My first, and extremely predictable, finding was that treatment of Orthodox Christians by Muslim rulers ranged from absolutely horrible

*and even genocidal to very peaceful and kind. Considering the long time period considered (14 centuries) and the immense geographical realm covered (our entire planet from Morocco to Indonesia and from Russia to South Africa), this is hardly surprising. The core beliefs of Islam might be simple, but humans are immensely complicated beings who always end up either adding a local tradition or, at least, defending one specific interpretation of Islam. My second finding was much more shocking: on average the status of Orthodox Christians under the Papacy was **much** worse than under Muslim rule. Again, I am not comparing the status of Orthodox Serbs under Ottoman rule with the status of Orthodox Christians in modern Italy. These are extreme examples. But I do claim that there is sort of a conceptual linear regression which strongly suggests to us that there is a predictive (linear) model which can be used to make predictions and that the most obvious lesson of history is that the absolute worst thing which can happen to Orthodox Christians is to fall under their so-called “Christian brothers” of the West. A few exceptions here and there do not significantly affect this model. I encourage everybody to take the time to really study the different types of Muslim rulers in history, if only to appreciate how much diversity you will find].*

Deconstructing the phobia’s assumptions: the “Muslim god” vs the “Christian God”

This is just about the silliest anti-Muslim argument I have ever heard and it come from folks inhabiting the far left side of a Bell Curve. It goes something like this:

We, Christians, have our true God as God, whereas the Muslims have Allah, which is not the God of the Christians. Thus, we worship different gods.

Of course, **the existence of various gods or one, single, God does not depend on who believes in Him or who worships Him.** If we can agree on the notion that God is He Who created all of Creation, and if we agree that both Christians (all denominations) and Muslims (all schools) believe that they are worshipping that God then, since there is only one real/existing God, we do worship the same God simply because there are not “other” gods.

I wonder what those who say that “Muslims worship another god” think when they read the following words of Saint Paul to the Athenian pagans: *“For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To The Unknown God.*

Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you” (Acts 17:23). What Saint Paul told them is that they ignorantly worship a god whom, in spite of that ignorant worship, Saint Paul declared to them. I submit that “ignorant worship” is not an insult, but a diagnosis of heterodoxy, and that such an “ignorant worship” can nonetheless be sincere.

The issue is not WHOM we worship, but HOW we worship (in terms of both *praxis* and *doxa*).

And yes, here the differences between Christians and Muslims are huge indeed.

In my 2013 article “[Russia and Islam, part eight: working together, a basic “how-to”](#)” I discussed the immense importance of these differences and how we ought to deal with them. I wrote:

The highest most sacred dogmatic formulation of Christianity is the so-called “Credo” or “Symbol of Faith” (full text [here](#); more info [here](#)). Literally every letter [down to the smallest ‘i’](#) of this text is, from the Christian point of view, the most sacred and perfect dogmatic formulation, backed by the full authority of the two Ecumenical Councils which proclaimed it and all the subsequent Councils which upheld it. In simple terms – the Symbol of Faith is absolutely non-negotiable, non-re-definable, non-re-interpretable, you cannot take anything away from it, and you cannot add anything to it. You can either accept it as is, in toto, or reject it.

The fact is that Muslims would have many problems with this text, but one part in particular is absolutely unacceptable to any Muslim:

*And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all ages, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made; **of one essence with the Father**, by whom all things were made*

*This part clearly and unambiguously affirms that Jesus-Christ was not only the Son of God but actually God Himself. This is expressed by the English formulation “of one essence with the Father” (ὁμοούσιον τῷ Πατρὶ in Greek with the key term *homousios* meaning “consubstantial”). This is *THE* core belief of Christianity: that Jesus was the the anthropos, the God-Man or God incarnate. This belief is categorically unacceptable to Islam which says that Christ was a prophet and by essence a ‘normal’ human being.*

For Islam, the very definition of what it is to be a Muslim is found in the so-called “[Shahada](#)” or testimony/witness. This is the famous statement by which a Muslim attests and proclaims that “There is no god but God, Muhammad is the messenger of God”. One can often also hear this phrased as “There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is His prophet”.

Now without even going into the issue of whether Christians can agree or not that “Allah” is the appropriate name for God (some do, some don’t – this is really irrelevant here), it’s the second part which is crucial here: Christianity does not recognize Muhammad as a prophet at all. In fact, technically speaking, Christianity would most likely classify Muhammad as a heretic (if only because of his rejection of the “Symbol of Faith”). Saint John of Damascus even called him a ‘false prophet’. Simply put: there is no way a Christian can accept the “Shahada” without giving up his Christianity just as there is no way for a Muslim to accept the “Symbol of Faith” without giving up his Islam.

So why bother?

*Would it not make much more sense to accept that there are fundamental and irreconcilable differences between Christianity and Islam and simply give up all that useless quest for points of theological agreement? Who cares if we agree on the secondary if we categorically disagree on the primary? I am all in favor of Christians studying Islam and for Muslims studying Christianity (in fact, I urge them both to do so!), and I think that it is important that the faithful of these religions talk to each other and explain their points of view as long as this is not presented as some kind of quest for a common theological stance. **Differences should be studied and explained, not obfuscated, minimized or overlooked.***

Bottom line is this: it is PRECISELY because Islam and Christianity are completely incompatible theologically (and even mutually exclusive!) that there is no natural enmity between these two religions unless, of course, some Christian or Muslim decides that he has to use force to promote this religion. And let’s be honest, taken as a whole Christianity’s record on forced conversions and assorted atrocities is at least as bad as Islam’s, or even worse. Of course, if we remove the Papacy from the overall Christian record, things looks better. If then we also remove the kind of imperialism Reformed countries engaged in, it looks even better. But even Orthodox rulers have, on occasion, resorted to forceful conversions and mass murder of others.

And here, just as in Islam, we notice that Christians also did not always spread their faith by love and compassion, especially once Christian rulers came to power in powerful empires or nations.

Deconstructing the phobia's assumptions: Islam was spread by the sword

In reality the “Islam spread by the sword” is a total canard, at least when we hear it from folks who defend “democracy” but who stubbornly refuse to concede that 1) most democracies came to power by means of violent revolutions and that 2) just a look at a newspaper today (at least a non-western newspaper) will tell you that democracy is STILL spread by the sword. As for the USA as country, it was built on by far the biggest bloodbath in history. If anything, Sharia law and Islam could teach a great deal to the country which:

1. spends more on aggression than the rest of the world combined
2. has the highest percentage of people incarcerated (and most of these for non-violent crimes)
3. whose entire economy is based on the military-industrial complex and who is engaged in more simultaneous wars of choice than any other country in history

So “Sharia Law Threatens America” is a lie. And this is the truth:



Was Islam really spread by the sword?

Maybe. But anybody making that claim better make darn sure that his/her religion, country or ideology has a much better record. If not, then this is pure hypocrisy!

Finally, I will also note that Christ said “*My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence*” (John 18:36). In contrast, the Prophet of Islam established the first Islamic state in Medina. So when we compare Muhammad’s actions to Christ, a better comparison should be with the various Christian rulers (including Byzantine ones) and we will soon find out that the Christian Roman Empire also used the sword on many occasions.

Next:

De-constructing the phobia’s assumptions: the Prophet of Islam was a bad man

You must have all sorts of stories about how the Prophet Muhammad did things we would disapprove of. I won’t list them here simply because the list of grievances is a little different in each case. I actually researched some of these accusations (about marrying young girls, or sentencing people to death for example) and in each case, there is a very solid Muslim defense of these incidents which is almost always ignored and which provides a crucial context to, at least, the better understanding of the incident discussed.

Since I am not a historian or a biographer of the Prophet Muhammad I don’t have any personal opinion on these accusations other than stating the obvious: I am not a Muslim and I don’t have to decide whether Muhammad was a sinful man or an infallible person (that is a purely theological argument). I will simply say that this *ad hominem* is only relevant to the degree that some Muslims would consider each action of their prophet as normative and not historical. Furthermore, even if they would consider each action of their prophet as normative, we need to recall here that we are dealing with a prophet, not a God-Man, and that therefore the comparison ought not to be made with Christ, whom Christians believe to be 100% sinless, but with a Christian prophet, say Moses, whom no real Christian will ever declare sinless or infallible. As for the Quran, let’s not compare it to just the New Testament but to all the books of the Bible taken together, including those who were eventually re-interpreted by the new religion of (some) Jews after the fall of Jerusalem: rabbinical/Phariseic Talmudism which found plenty of passages in its (deliberately

falsified) “Masoretic” text of the Old Testament “Tanakh” (please see [here](#) if you don’t know what falsification I am referring to).

Finally, NO religious text worth anything is self-explanatory or “explains itself” by means of comparing passages. This is also why all major religions have a large corpus of texts which explain, interpret, expand upon and otherwise give the (deceptively simple looking) text its real, profound, meaning. Furthermore, most major religions also have a rich oral tradition which also sheds light on written religious documents. Whatever may be the case, simply declaring that “Islam is a threat” because we don’t approve of the actions of the founder of Islam is simply silly. The next accusation is much more material:

Deconstructing the phobia’s assumptions: Islam is incompatible with democracy

That is by far the most interesting argument and one which many Muslims would agree with! Of course, it all depends on what you mean by “democracy”. Let me immediately concede that if by “democracy” you mean this:



Then, indeed, Islam is incompatible with modern western democracy. But so is (real) Christianity!

So the so-called “West” has to decide what its core values are. If Conchita Wurst is an embodiment of “democracy” then Islam and Christianity are both equally

incompatible with it. Orthodox Christianity, for sure, has not caved in to the homo-lobby in the same way most western Christian denominations have.

But, if by “democracy” we don’t mean “gay pride” parades but rather true pluralism, true people-power, and the real sovereignty of the people, then what I call “core Islam” is not a threat to democracy at all. None. However, there is also no doubt about two truisms:

1. Some Muslim states are profoundly reactionary and freedom crushing
2. Traditional Islam is incompatible with many modern “western values”

Still, it is also very easy to counter these truism with the following replies

1. Some Muslim states are pluralistic, progressive and defend the oppressed (Muslim or not)
2. Traditional Christianity is incompatible with modern “western values”

Again, Iran is, in my opinion, the perfect illustration of a pluralistic (truly diverse!), progressive and freedom defending Muslim state. I simply don’t have the time and place to go into a detailed discussion of the polity of Iran (I might have to do that in a future article), and for the time being I will point you to the hyper-pro-Zionist Wikipedia article (which nobody will suspect of being pro-Muslim or pro-Iranian) about the “[Politics of Iran](#)” which will show you two things: Iran is an “Islamic Republic” meaning that it is a republic, yes, but one which has Islam as its supreme law. There is absolutely nothing inherently less democratic about an Islamic republic which has a religion as its supreme law than an atheistic/secular republic which has a constitution as its supreme law. In fact, some countries don’t even have a constitution (the UK and Israel come to mind). As for the Iranian polity, it has a very interesting system of checks and balances which a lot of countries would do well to emulate (Russia for starters).

As for modern “western values”, they are completely incompatible with Christianity (the real, original, unadulterated thing) even if they are very compatible with modern western (pseudo-) Christian denominations.

So, now the question becomes: is there something profoundly incompatible between the real, traditional, Islam and the real, traditional, Christianity? I am not talking about purely theological differences here, but social and political consequences

which flow from theological differences. Two immediately come to my mind (but there are more, of course):

- The death penalty, especially for apostasy
- Specific customs (dress code, ban on alcohol, separation of genders in various settings, etc.)

The first one, this is really a non-issue because while traditional, Patristic, Christianity has a general, shall we say, “inclination” against the death penalty. This has not always been the case in all Orthodox countries. So while we can say that by and large Orthodox Christians are typically not supporters of the death penalty, this is not a theological imperative or any kind of dogma. In fact, modern Russia has implemented a moratorium on the death penalty (to join the Council of Europe – hardly a moral or ethical reason) but most of the Russian population favor its re-introduction. Note that Muslims in Russia are apparently living their lives in freedom and overall happiness and when they voice grievances (often legitimate ones), they don’t have “reintroduce the death penalty” as a top priority demand.

The simple truth is that each country has to decide for itself whether it will use the death penalty or not. Once a majority of voters have made that decision, members of each religion will have to accept that decision as a fact of law which can be criticized, but not one which can be overturned by any minority.

As for religious tribunals, they can be easily converted by the local legislature into a “mediation firm” which can settle conflicts, but only if both sides agree to recognize its authority. So if two Muslims want their dispute to be settled by an Islamic Court, the latter can simply act as a mediator as long as its decision does not violate any local or national laws. Hardly something non-Muslims (who could always refuse to recognize the Islamic Court) need to consider a “threat” to their rights or lifestyles.

As for the social customs, here it is really a no-brainer: apply Islamic rules to those who chose to be Muslims and let the other people live their lives as they chose to. You know, “live and let live”. Besides, in terms of dress code and gender differentiation, traditional Islam and traditional Christianity are very close.

Check out this typical Russian doll, and look at what she is wearing: this was the traditional Russian dress for women for centuries and this is still what Orthodox women (at least those who still follow ancient Christian customs) wear in Church.

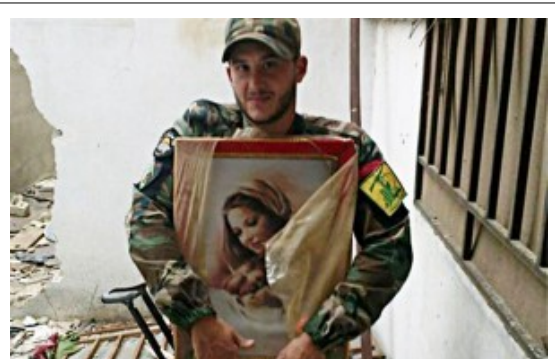
Furthermore, if you go into a Latin parish in southern Europe or Latin America, you will often find women covering their heads, not only in church, but also during the day. The simple truth is that these clothes are not only modest and beautiful, they are also very comfortable and practical.

The thing which Islamophobes always miss is that they take examples of laws and rules passed by some Muslim states and assume that this is how all Muslim states will always act. But this is simply false. Let's take the example of Hezbollah (that name means "party of God", by the way) in Lebanon which has clearly stated on many occasions that it has no intention of transforming Lebanon into a Shia-only state. Not only did Hezbollah say that many times, but they acted on it and they always have had a policy of collaboration with truly patriotic Christians (of any denomination). Even in today's resistance (*moqawama*) there are Christians who are not members of Hezbollah as a party (and why would they when this is clearly and officially a Muslim party and not a Christian one?!), but they are part of the military resistance.



An "Islamic Matrioshka"?!

[Sidebar: by the way, the first female suicide bomber in Lebanon was not a Muslim. She was an 18 year old from an Orthodox family who joined the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and blew herself up in her car on an Israeli checkpoint (inside Lebanon, thus a legitimate target under international law!), killing two



A Hezbollah fighter respectfully picks up an image of the Mother of God from the ruins of a church destroyed by US-backed Takfiris

Israeli invaders and injuring another twelve. Her name was Sana'a Mehadli]

Recent events in Syria were also very telling: when the AngloZionist Empire unleashed its aggression against Syria and the “good terrorists” of al-Qaeda/al-Nusra/ISIS/etc. embarked in a wholesale program of massacres and atrocities, everybody ran for their lives, including all the non-Takfiri Muslims. Then, when the plans of the Axis of Kindness (USA, KSA, Israel) were foiled by the combined actions of Russia, Iran, Syria and Hezbollah, something interesting happened: the Latin Christians left, whereas the Orthodox Christians stayed ([source](#)). Keep in mind that Syria is *not* an Islamic state, yet the prospects of a Muslim majority was frightening enough for the Latins to flee even though the Orthodox felt comfortable staying. What do these Orthodox Christians know?

Could it be that elite traditionalist Shia soldiers represent no threat to Orthodox Christians?

Deconstructing the phobia's assumptions: Islam generates terrorism

In fact, there is some truth to that too. But I would re-phrase it as: the AngloZionists in their hatred for anything Russian, including Soviet Russia, identified a rather small and previously obscure branch of Islam in Saudi Arabia which they decided to unleash against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. From the first day, these Takfiris were federated by the USA and financed by the House of Saud. The latter, in its fear of being overthrown by the Takfiris, decided to appease them by internationally supporting their terrorism (that is all Takfiris have to offer, their leaders are not respected scholars, to put it mildly). Since that time, the Takfiris have been the “boots on the ground” used by the West against all its enemies: Serbia, Russia first, but then also secular (Syria) or anti-Takfiri Muslim states (Iran).

So it is not “Islam” which generates terrorism: it is western (AngloZionist) imperialism.

The US and Israel are, by a wide margin, the biggest sponsors of terrorism (just as the West was always by far the biggest source of imperialism in history) and while they want to blame “Islam” for most terrorist attacks, the truth is that behind every such “Muslim” attack we find a western “deep state” agents acting, from the GIA in Algeria, to al-Qaeda in Iraq, to al-Nusra in Syria to, most crucially, 9/11 in New York. These

were all events created and executed by semi-literate Takfiri patsies who were run by agents of the western deep states.

As far as I know, all modern terrorist groups are, in reality, “operated by remote control” by state actors who alone can provide the training, know-how, finances, logistical support, etc needed by the terrorists.

And here is an interesting fact: the two countries which have done the most to crush Takfiri terrorism are Russia and Iran. But the collective West is still categorically refusing to work with these countries to crush the terrorism these western states claim to be fighting.

So, do you really believe that the West is fighting terrorism?

If yes, I got a few bridges to sell all over the planet.

Conclusion: cui bono? the so-called “liberals”

There are many more demonstratively false assumptions which are made by the AngloZionist propaganda machine. I have only listed a few. Now we can look to the apparent paradox in which we see the western “liberals” both denouncing Islamophobia and, at the same time, repeating all the worst cliches about Islam. In this category, [Barak Obama](#) and [Hillary Clinton](#) are the most egregious examples of this hypocrisy because, while pretending to be friends of Muslims, they got more Muslims killed than anybody else. For western liberals, Islam is a perfect pretext to, on one hand, cater to minorities (ethnic or religious) while pretending to be extremely tolerant of others. Western liberals use Islam in the West, as a way to force the locals to give up their traditions and values. You could say that western liberals “love” Islam just like they “love” [LGBTQIAPK+](#) “pride” parades: simply and only as a tool to crush the (still resisting) majority of the people in the West who have not been terminally brainwashed by the AngloZionist legacy corporate propaganda machine.

Conclusion: cui bono? the so-called “conservatives”

Western conservatism is dead. It died, killed by two main causes: the abject failure of National-Socialism (which was an Anglo plan to defeat the USSR) and by its total lack of steadfastness of the western conservatives who abandoned pretty much any and all principles they were supposed to stand for. Before the 1990s, the conservative movements of the West were close to fizzling out into nothingness, but then the Neocons (for their own, separate, reasons) began pushing the “Islamic threat” canard

and most conservatives jumped on it in the hope of using it to regain some relevance. Some of these conservatives even jumped on the “Christian revival in Russia” theory (which is not quite a canard, but which is also nothing like what the Alt-Righters imagine it to be) to try to revive their own, long dead, version of “Christianity”. These are desperate attempts to find a source of power and relevance outside a conservative movement which is basically dead. Sadly, what took the place of the real conservative movement in the West is the abomination known as “National Zionism” (which I discussed [here](#)) and whose ideological cornerstone is a rabid, hysterical, Islamophobia.

Conclusion: cui bono? the US deep state

That one is easy and obvious: the US deep state needs the “Islamic threat” canard for two reasons: to unleash against its enemies and to terrify the people of the USA so that they accept the wholesale destruction of previously sacred civil rights. This is so obvious that there is nothing to add here. I will only add that I am convinced that the US deep state is also supporting both the Alt-Right phenomenon and the various “stings” against so-called “domestic terrorists” (only Muslims, by the way). What the Neocons and their deep-state need, above all, is chaos and crises which they use to shape the US political landscape.

Finally, the real conclusion: rate the source! always rate the source...

Whom did we identify as the prime sources of Islamophobia? The liberals who want to seize power on behalf of a coalition of minorities, conservatives who have long ditched truly conservative values and deep state agents who want to terrify US Americans and kill the enemies of the AngloZionist Empire.

I submit to you that these folks are most definitely not your friends. In fact, they are your real enemy and, unlike various terrorists abroad who are thousands of miles away from the USA, these real enemies are not only here, they are already in power and rule over you! **And they are using Islam just like a matador uses a red cape: to distract you from the real threat: National Zionism.** This is as true in the US as it is true in the EU. Most westerners are now conditioned to react with fear and horror when they hear “Allahu Akbar”. This is very predictable since most of what is shown in the western media is Takfiris screaming “Allahu Akbar” before cutting the throats of their victims (or rejoicing at the suffering/death of “infidels”).

Yet in the Donbass, the local Orthodox Christians knew that wherever that slogan (which simply means “God is greater” or “God is the greatest”) was heard the

Ukronazis are on the run. And now we see Russia sending mostly Muslim units to Syria to protect not only Muslims, but everybody who needs protection.

Having a sizable Muslim minority in Russia, far from being any kind of threat, has turned out to be a huge advantage for Russia in her competition against the AngloZionist Empire.

There are, by the way, also Chechens fighting on the other side in this conflict: the very same Takfiris who were crushed and expelled from Chechnia by the joint efforts of the Chechen people and the Russian armed forces. So, again, we have Muslims on both sides, the Takfiris now happily united with the Nazis, and the traditionalist Muslims of Kadyrov protecting the people of Novorussia.



That is one, amongst many more, nuances which the Islamophobic propaganda always carefully chooses to ignore.

Should you?

The Saker

A Negative View of Christianity and Religion in General

May 03, 2016



We live in a post-Christian society, not only because truly religious Christians are now in a small minority, but also because culturally and spiritually our society has almost completely severed any links it once had with the original Christianity of the early Church. One of my favorite quotes of all time is "*God created man in His image and man returned Him the favor*". This aphorism is so good that it was attributed to Mark Twain, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, George Bernard Shaw, Bertrand Russel, Frank Wedekind and Voltaire. I think that this sentence contains the best overall summary of what Christianity is in the 21st century. What I want to do today, is to express a few negative views about Christianity and about religion in general. When I say "negative", I don't mean to say bad things about it, but rather to say what it is **not**. Believe it or not, this is an ancient form of theological discourse called "[apophatic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apophatic_theology)" (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apophatic_theology) or "negative theology" (as opposed to "cataphatic" or "positive theology") – a theology which rather than describing what God is, attempts to describe Him by saying what He is not. What I want to do is to apply the same methodology to the concept of religion in general and to Christianity in particular, and describe what it is not. I won't go into lofty and abstract theological issues though, but keep it as simple and straightforward as I can.

Of course, by stating what it is not, I do imply that what Christianity was/is something objective and not just the product of a social consensus or the opinion of a majority of people, but something which can be described, but not redefined or

shaped by an opinion. In other words, there was/is a “True Christianity” which is “true” in the Slavonic understanding of the word Istina or the Hebrew Emet ([see here for an explanation](http://thesaker.is/absolutely-amazing-discussion-of-the-meaning-of-the-word-truth-according-to-4-cultures/) (http://thesaker.is/absolutely-amazing-discussion-of-the-meaning-of-the-word-truth-according-to-4-cultures/)) of “truth according to content”). However, it is not my purpose today to describe it positively, if only because that is something infinitely more complex and subtle than to describe what it is *not*.

The three "levels of religious satisfaction"

One of the greatest Orthodox theologians of the 20th century, Father Lev Lebedev, used to say that people find three kinds of “satisfactions” when they go to church: a spiritual level, a psychological level, and an emotional level. What he meant is that different people attend religious services for different reasons – some seek a prayerful interaction with God, others find solace from their suffering while others feel uplifted by the aesthetic beauty of the religious ceremony itself. Father Lev correctly stated that ideally, one ought to experience all of these different levels at the same time because they are complementary and not mutually exclusive. Father Lev was describing what he observed as a cleric of the Orthodox Church in Russia in the 1980s and 1990s and I think that this somewhat limited his view of the matter. What I would like to attempt now is to describe other reasons which make people identify themselves as Christians/Orthodox and which have absolutely nothing to do with real religion, Christianity or Orthodoxy.

Religion as a basis for ethical values

A lot of people nowadays generally approve of the so-called “Christian values” which are basically the Ten Commandments and the various ethical guidelines derived from them: not to steal, not to lie, to be kind to others, to be truthful, to live a life of modesty, to be faithful, etc. These are the folks who will say that religion plays a positive moral and educational role in society, that a non-religious society will inevitably lose a sense of right and wrong, that high ideals are needed to live a worthy life. The “need” for that kind of religion is simple: as Dostoevsky said “if there is no God all is permissible” – there is simply no logical way to define “right” and “wrong” unless you can “peg” these concepts to an absolute, transcendental source/origin of your definition. Stealing is not logically inherently bad – it is bad because “God said so”. I think of this as the “utilitarian God”: we invent ourselves a “God” who just so happens to tell us to live according to the principles we like. You think I am exaggerating? Okay, let me give you a simple example: think of all the folks who

condemn Islam for allowing the death penalty for certain actions and who say “how can a religion practice capital punishment? This is so inhuman – I don’t accept that”. Notice that these people never ask themselves a simple and basic question: what if God happens to approve of the death penalty? That they don’t care about. These people don’t reject Islam because they don’t believe that there is a God or because they don’t believe that Mohamed is His prophet – they reject Islam because they don’t like what Islam teaches, irrespective of the existence of God or whether Mohamed was, or was not His prophet. These are the same kind of folks who reject Latin Christianity for not allowing divorce or birth control: they simply *reject any religion whose teachings do not coincide with their own* – and to hell (pun intended) with any objective reality. These are exactly the kind of people who “create” themselves a “God” in their own image.

Religion as a form of national self-definition

Do you know the difference between a Serb, a Croat and a “Bosniac” (i.e, a Muslim from Bosnia)? Their religion. That is not to say that there are no other differences between these South Slavs or that you cannot be a Serb, a Croat or a “Bosniac” and an atheist or, say, a Buddhist. But the root cause, the core of the historical development of differences between these three groups most definitely originates in the fact that Croats are Latins (i.e., “Roman Catholics”), the Serbs Orthodox Christians and the “Bosniacs” Muslims.

Remember that nationalism is really a 19th century West European invention and that in most of mankind’s history people defined themselves according to their place of birth (in a local sense, village, town), according to their allegiance to a leader (Emperor, feudal lord, tribal leader, etc.) and, sometimes, according to their religion. For example, the Ottoman Empire recognized the Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople as the “head of the Roman nation” (*rum millet*) or “*millet bashi*” as an ethnarch whose authority extended over all the Orthodox Christians of the Ottoman Empire *regardless of their ethnic or linguistic affiliations*. You could be Armenian, Persian, Arab or Serb – if you were Orthodox the “*millet bashi*” spoke for you and was your leader.

As for the much-suffering [Gagauz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gagauz_people) people (Turkic Orthodox Christians); (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gagauz_people), they were originally considered as “Greeks” by the Turks only to be thought of as “Turks” by many Greeks in the 19th century.

Another example: in the Russian Empire, [Karaites](#) were not considered as Jews. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karaite_Judaism) In fact, the Russian Empire never discriminated against people on the basis of what we today would call their "ethnicity" but defined their "nationality" on the basis of their religion. In fact, many Russian Czars were mostly of German "ethnic" stock.

Today Empires are gone, but from Ulster to Bosnia and even to Russia, religion has now become a form of national identity: "I am Orthodox because I am Russian" or "I am a Muslim because I am a Kazakh". My personal reaction to this kind of "religious patriotism" is that these people really worship *themselves*. Think of it: any real religion should, in theory, be universalistic: if we are all the creatures of the same Creator and children of the same Father, then we are all brothers and sisters and our ethnic, cultural, linguistic or regional idiosyncrasies should be completely irrelevant to the profound spiritual bond attaching us all to each other.

This is exactly what Malcolm X saw after his pilgrimage to Mecca where traditional Islam made him abandon all his racist views about "blue-eyed White devils" and all the rest of the nonsense preached by the pseudo-Islamic sect of the "Nation of Islam" and Elijah Muhammad.

This is also why German Nazis could not accept the unambiguous teaching of the New Testament about Jews:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28); For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free and have been all made to drink into one Spirit (Gal 5:6); Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God (1 Cor 7:19); For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit (1 Cor; 12:13)

The sad but also inevitable reality is that in every single case of "religious nationalism" religion is always subservient to nationalism and religion is really an ancillary means towards a much more important nationalistic goal: to proclaim some kind of "*imprimatur* from God" to a rabid form of nationalism and, really, self-worship. As if God was busy with, or even interested in, our petty nationalistic agenda!

One wonderful Ukrainian Orthodox priest once told me *“how can I think of nationalist issues when the angels are standing next to me at the altar!”* And he was absolutely right of course. Religious nationalists are also the kind of people who “create” themselves a “God” in their own image.

Religion as an ideological tool of statecraft

The two forms of “utilitarian religion” above are often combined into one particularly insidious form of pseudo-religion which sees the people in power using religion as an instrument to foster patriotism and social responsibility.

Sadly, there is a lot of that in modern Russia. Communism, at least in its Soviet form has been pretty much rejected, at least by most people, and Capitalism’s reputation is now road kill in modern Russia. Oh sure, some Communist/Socialist ideals are still very much respected and proclaimed and most Russians want to have the opportunity to have their own business and make good money. But neither Communism nor Capitalism can play the role which Orthodoxy played in Russia before the 17th century or the Marxist ideology played during the Soviet era. This is why you very often will see Russian politicians say that “Russia needs a national idea”. This is not a spiritual vacuum, but an ideological one and, sadly, the “official” Russian Orthodox Church (aka the “Moscow Patriarchate”) has been more than willing to fill this ideological vacuum. As a result, political officers have often been replaced by priests, official ceremonies now almost always involve a clergyman and the “Patriarch” is now playing a very important political role. In many ways this has been a very positive development because this gives the Russian people a possibility to explore their own, individual feelings and interest towards religion in general and Orthodoxy specifically, but this also has an extremely deleterious effect on the millions of potential Orthodox Christians who are turned away from this form of Orthodoxy because of its obvious subservience to the State, its agenda, and policies. You might say that there is no reason for the Moscow Patriarchate not to support Putin, and I would agree but, alas, this is also what the Moscow Patriarchate did under Yeltsin and even the Soviet leaders.

As a result, the situation of Orthodox Christianity in Russia is very similar to the one of Latin Christianity in South America: real piety is mostly confined to the parish level while everything above this level is permeated, at various degrees, by politics and cynicism. As I have already [described in a past article](http://vineyardsaker.blogspot.com/2013/02/russia-and-islam-part-two-russian.html) (<http://vineyardsaker.blogspot.com/2013/02/russia-and-islam-part-two-russian.html>)

by the late 1920s Russian Orthodoxy was split into at least 4 major branches (to which one could also add several [Old Rite denominations](#))

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Old-Rite_Church) and the only reason why the branch which is currently considered as “official” was chosen (by the state and during the Soviet era!) as the “right one” is that it was absolutely and 100% loyal to the Soviet state just as it is now loyal to the new Russian state. Yes, total subservience to a secular state power as a “criterion of Orthodoxy” is, sadly, the only reason why the Moscow Patriarchate is recognized as the “official” Orthodox Church today.

I would note that this is not just a Russian problem – it is exactly the same in many other officially “Orthodox” countries, especially in Eastern Europe (Romania, Bulgaria). By the way, we can also observe the same phenomenon in much of the Muslim world where political regimes get to decide which branch of Islam is considered as “correct” and which one is to be confined to jails. And just as in the Orthodox Church, we see “official” Islamic institutions issue exactly the kind of fatwas which the state needs in support of its policies.

Of course, none of the above has anything to do with Christ or Mohammed and, furthermore, none of the above has anything to do with religion as such. This is just a typical manifestation of religion as a tool of statecraft which Marx and Lenin had identified a long time ago. Where Marx and Lenin were, of course, wrong is when they said that all religions must be like that, that religions are inherently a tool of political control. The history of Orthodoxy and Islam are both full of examples of Bishops and Sheikhs and even entire religious hierarchies “[rendering unto to Cesar what belongs to God](#)”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Render_unto_Caesar)

and “[serving two masters](#)“

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_6:24).

But you will also find amazing examples in Orthodoxy and Islam where religious leaders openly and courageously defied the worldly powers (I think of [Patriarch Hermogen](#) of Moscow,

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patriarch_Hermogenes_of_Moscow)

or [Husayn ibn Ali](#))

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day_of_Ashura)).

This is nothing new and has nothing to do with religion: it is a profoundly human phenomenon which can be found throughout history and in every place where there is power. Power does indeed corrupt, and it also corrupts religious leaders.

In the West, this tendency to replace a mystical Christianity with a form of “sacralized secular domination” began almost immediately after the fall of Rome and the Western Roman Empire (in 476 AD) and the subsequent separation of Frankish-controlled Rome from the rest of the Roman Christian world (in 1054) which outlived Rome by a full millennium (until 1453 exactly). In 1075 already the Papacy adopted an amazing document which became known as the *Dictatus Papae* (or Papal Dictation) and which contained 27 principles which had never ever been part of the teachings of the Early Church and the Church Fathers. Here is the full list: Source: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dictatus_papae)

1. That the Roman church was founded by God alone.
2. That the Roman pontiff alone can with right be called universal.
3. That he alone can depose or reinstate bishops.
4. That, in a council, his legate, even if a lower grade, is above all bishops, and can pass sentence of deposition against them.
5. That the pope may depose the absent.
6. That, among other things, we ought not to remain in the same house with those excommunicated by him.
7. That for him alone is it lawful, according to the needs of the time, to make new laws, to assemble together new congregations, to make an abbey of a canonry; and, on the other hand, to divide a rich bishopric and unite the poor ones.
8. That he alone may use the imperial insignia.
9. That of the pope alone all princes shall kiss the feet.
10. That his name alone shall be spoken in the churches.
11. That this title [Pope] is unique in the world.
12. That it may be permitted to him to depose emperors.

13. That he may be permitted to transfer bishops if need be.
14. That he has the power to ordain a clerk of any church he may wish.
15. That he who is ordained by him may preside over another church, but may not hold a subordinate position; and that such a one may not receive a higher grade from any bishop.
16. That no synod shall be called a general one without his order.
17. That no chapter and no book shall be considered canonical without his authority.
18. That a sentence passed by him may be retracted by no one; and that he himself, alone of all, may retract it.
19. That he himself may be judged by no one.
20. That no one shall dare to condemn one who appeals to the apostolic chair.
21. That to the latter should be referred the more important cases of every church.
22. That the Roman church has never erred; nor will it err to all eternity, the Scripture bearing witness.
23. That the Roman pontiff, if he has been canonically ordained, is undoubtedly made holy by the merits of St. Peter; St. Ennodius, bishop of Pavia, bearing witness, and many holy fathers agreeing with him. As is contained in the decrees of St. Symmachus the pope.
24. That, by his command and consent, it may be lawful for subordinates to bring accusations.
25. That he may depose and reinstate bishops without assembling a synod.
26. That he who is not at peace with the Roman church shall not be considered catholic.
27. That he may absolve subjects from their fealty to wicked men.

Every one of these new rules is in total and categorical contradiction with the preceding 1000 year long history of the Church, which used to be called "Catholic" because not only of its universal nature, but because it was based on conciliar (all-including) meetings where all bishops were considered equal and no authority was recognized as superior to such a council of bishops.

Just two decades after cutting itself off from the Christian world, in 1054, the Pope declared himself some kind of “super-absolute-bishop”, in 1075, something unheard of before, and then soon thereafter, in 1096, the Papacy declared its first ‘crusade’. ***Does anybody really think that this is a coincidence?***

And lest anybody believe that this is a fluke and that Pope Gregory VII was just one insane person, I would add here that he was Gregory VII that was beatified by Pope Gregory XIII in 1584 and canonized in 1728 by Pope Benedict XIII so this is very, very “official” stuff, not just the lunatic ravings of a single megalomaniac. This is why Fedor Dostoevsky’s [Grand Inquisitor](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/8578/8578-h/8578-h.htm) (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/8578/8578-h/8578-h.htm>) has the audacity to silence Christ Himself and say to Him “*Thou hast no right to add one syllable to that which was already uttered by Thee before*”: because the Papacy has always considered itself above God (and His Church).

This is no different than the no less megalomaniacal claim of [Pharisaic Talmudism](#) (aka “Orthodox Judaism” in official modern parlance)

(<http://thesaker.is/off-topic-but-apparently-needed-judaism-and-christianity-back-to-basics/>)

that a rabbi can “[argue with God](#)”,

(<https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/5298/Arguing-with-God.pdf>),

win the debate, and even rule over Him and “[fix his Creation](#)”

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tikkun_olam)

and [rule over Him](#)!

(<http://rabbiarthursegal.blogspot.com/2009/06/rabbi-arthur-segalmy-children-have.html>)

It is really no surprise that Pharisaic Talmudism eventually degenerated to the crude religion of “[Holocaustism](#)”

(<http://robertfaurisson.blogspot.com/2009/03/secular-religion-of-holocaust-tainted.html>)

- overt self-worship of the Kabbalistic concept of “[collective Messiah](#)”

(<https://livingwisdom.kabbalah.com/what-messiah>).

I think I can already hear the militant secularists proclaiming that all this is typical of the “[God delusion](#) “

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_God_Delusion),

that religion is a psychopathology which inevitably produces the kind of horrors I have described above. To them, I would just say that for all their real crimes, religions still favorably compare to modern secular and putatively "Enlightened" ideologies (from the Masonic French Revolution to Marxists class warfare to modern Capitalism) whose "atrocities scorecard" goes in the hundreds of millions. Those who believe that religions cause atrocities simply fail to understand that religions always bring *people* together and that *people* always behave in a violent way, including religious people. What makes religions different is that they at least offer a rationale to renounce violence (our common brotherhood in God) and an explanation for our tendency to use violence (our fallen nature). Yes, religions have been used by states to justify atrocities, but that use of religion is, of course, a misuse of religion clearly condemned by Christ (render unto Caesar...). However, ***what has made religions so susceptible to such misuse has been their own gradual departure from what a real religion ought to be into a man-made product filled with all the inherent sins and mistakes of mankind.***

The modern "ecumenism" of pseudo-religions

In the beginning of this article, I did say that I would not discuss what Christianity (and religion in general) really is and that I would only describe what it is not. Still, at the very least, I have to mention a few key characteristics of early Christianity which can still be found in various parts of the modern Orthodox world and which set it apart from the rest of the so-called "Christian world". What I would like to do next is to show what makes modern religions so profoundly similar to each other and what makes early Christianity so different from modern religions.

In a [recent article for the Unz Review](#)

(<http://www.unz.com/ishamir/three-churches-summit/>)

Israel Shamir wrote the following:

“In my eyes, Catholic Church is the Church of the West, while the Orthodox Church is the Church of the East. Each church has its own garden to tend, its own traditions and ways. The East likes its priests bearded, the West prefers them shaved. The East likes them married, the West likes them married to the church.”

The East has no single head and spiritual leader: every national church is equal to its sister church. The West has the Pope. The East takes for Eucharist its leavened bread mixed with wine, the West prefers unleavened bread for all, with wine for the clergy only. Such differences are normal and do not prevent the churches' rapprochement (...). The biggest theological difference is filioque..."

which is so obscure that few worshippers understand or care.

Shamir, who was writing in the wake of the meeting between the Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill is absolutely correct: this minimal list of rather superficial "differences" is pretty much all that separates the modern and official types of Orthodoxy and Latin Christianity embodied by these two clerics. But if the meeting had taken place not between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill but, say, the Abbot of the [Esphigmenou](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Esphigmenou) (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Esphigmenou>) monastery on Mount Athos or the Rector of [The International Seminary of Saint Pius X](http://www.seminaire-econe.ch/gbcom/) (<http://www.seminaire-econe.ch/gbcom/>) in Ecône, Switzerland, the list of differences between the two religions would have been far longer and substantive. It would have included a long list of irreconcilable dogmatic differences (the *doxa*, including the very concept of a super-bishop like the Pope) and an equally long and substantive list of differences in which Orthodox and Latin Christians live their faith on a daily basis (the *praxis*).

While in the recent past some Orthodox and Latin clerics have developed what could be called the "[theology of the two lungs](http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/balamand.pdf)"

(<http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/balamand.pdf>) which declares that the Orthodox Church and the Papacy are the "two lungs" of the Church (which is the *theandric* Body of Christ). The reality is that Orthodox and Latin ecclesiologies (the teaching about the nature of the Church) have been mutually exclusive at least since the 11th century and until the 20th century. Believe it or not, but even "traditionalist" (pre [Vatican II](#))

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Vatican_Council)

Latins are, from the point of view of traditional (early Church compatible) Orthodoxy *heretics* who have engaged in over one thousand years of innovations and departure from the faith "*which the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers. On this was the Church founded; and if anyone departs from this, he neither is nor any longer ought to be called a Christian*" (St. Athanasios).

[Sidebar: When discussing theological topics “heretic” is not an insult but refers simply to any person who has made a “different choice” from the teaching of the Church. A “heresy” is thus just a “choice” of something different. This can be contrasted with, for example, the word “schismatic” which is a person creating a rift/division in a religious organization but without proclaiming any different teaching or dogma. By the way, “dogma” simply means “belief” in the sense of “accepted theological tenet”. Finally, the word *canon* simple means a rule, a measure, a standard. Nowadays these words elicit images of pyres, autodafés, witch-hunts, etc., but in reality, these are absolutely necessary concepts to understand even the basics of Christian thought.]

If, from a traditional Orthodox point of view Latins are heretics, then from the traditional Latin view the Orthodox are schismatics who have rebelled against the authority of the Pope and thereby cut themselves off from the True Church entirely. Of course, nowadays, it is highly politically incorrect to say these things; that is why they are replaced by various ceremonies and meetings where the heads of the "official" (i.e. state supported) Orthodox and Latin churches hug and kiss each other, exchange presents and speak of unity. From the point of view of traditional (in the sense of "historical") Orthodoxy and Papacy such displays of mutual affection are not only ridiculous, but they are highly immoral because they completely obfuscate the real and substantive reasons for the 1000 year long separation between the two denominations (what would [Saint Nicholas of Myra have to say to such public hugging?!\)](#)

(<http://www.stnicholascenter.org/pages/bishop-nicholas-loses-his-cool/>).

Just to give you a little taste of what kind of language the original Church used in describing interactions with heretics, let me quote from a canon of the Quinisextine Ecumenical Council (691), which both the Latin and Orthodox Churches fully recognized as authoritative, about marriage between Christians and heretics:

“An Orthodox (in the sense of “right believing” – the Saker) man is not permitted to marry a heretical woman, nor is an Orthodox woman to be joined to a heretical man. But if anything of this kind appears to have been done by any, we require them to consider the marriage null, and that the marriage be dissolved. For it is not fitting to mingle together what should not be mingled, nor is it right that the sheep be joined with the wolf, nor the lot of "sinners with the portion of Christ!” (Canon LXXII)

Still feel like kissing and hugging? Let me repeat here that officially both Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis have never repudiated the Quinisextine Ecumenical Council (at least not yet!). Instead, they just don't talk about such "minor and obscure" canons anymore.

Are you shocked by this kind of language?

I can give you an even more shocking example.

All Christians are banned, by no less than the Holy Apostles themselves, to pray with anybody who does not fully and totally share the same exact faith as they do. Yup, both Latins and Orthodox are categorically banned from praying with each other, even in their private homes! Here is the exact quote:

Canon 10 of the Holy Apostles: "If one who is not in communion **prays together, even at home**, let him be excommunicated".

And what about these canons:

Canon 45 of the Holy Apostles: "A Bishop, or a Presbyter, or a Deacon that only prays together with heretics, should be excommunicated; if he has permitted then to perform anything as Clergyman, let him be defrocked."

Canon 64 of the Holy Apostles: "If a Clergyman or a Layman should enter a Jewish synagogue, or pray with heretics, let him be excommunicated and defrocked."

Yes, Christians are banned from ever entering a synagogue which, of course, both the Latin Pope and the Patriarch of Moscow have done – they have even greeted the Judaics as "brothers" and the Pope went as far as to declare that they both are awaiting the return of the same Messiah!

Again, I fully understand that somebody would reject Christianity because such canons would offend his/her feelings, but what I don't understand is how those who think of themselves as Christians can either reject or ignore them. After all, these are canons handed down from the Apostles themselves, canons which have been fully endorsed by the entire Christian Church for 2000+ years and which have never been denounced by either the Orthodox or the Latins ([for a full list and interpretation of Apostolic canons](#) see:

http://www.holytrinitymission.org/books/english/cannons_apostles_rudder.htm).

[Sidebar: there is nothing as dangerous as when a novice in the subtle and often paradoxical theological matters grabs a book of canons and begins reading into it all sorts of prescriptions as to how things ought to be done. Canons are not dogmas, and what is important in them is not the letter, but the spirit. Furthermore, some canons have been deliberately set aside and that is exactly how this should be in a living Church which is not just a collection of old rules. I quote these canons solely to illustrate the language and spirit in which, they were written and to contrast them to the sugary language used in modern pseudo-theological declarations].

Those shocked by what might (mistakenly) appear as the intolerance contained in the examples I give above ought to consider a simple fact: unlike Pharisaic Talmudism (the religion of [Maimonides](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maimonides) (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maimonides>), [Karo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_ben_Ephraim_Karo) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_ben_Ephraim_Karo) and [Luria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Luria) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Luria), aka modern “Judaism”) the spiritual roots of Christianity are truly in the religion of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: the ancient faith of the Jewish people before Christ and whose foremost Commandment is “*Thou shalt have no other gods before me*”. Replace the word "God" with the word "truth" (two aspects of the same reality, really) and you immediately get a sense of where the apparent "intolerance" of Christianity comes from. For example, the ban on marrying a heretic, even a Christian heretic, is a direct continuation of the ban for Jews taking spouses from other ethnicities. While Pharisaic Talmudism added a racist interpretation for this ban, the traditional Jewish and Christian ban is based on purely spiritual reasons: to jealously preserve the purity of the faith. And this is precisely why the LXXII Canon quoted above goes on to say:

“But if any who up to this time are unbelievers and are not yet numbered in the flock of the Orthodox have contracted lawful marriage between themselves, and if then, one choosing the right and coming to the light of truth and the other remaining still detained by the bond of error and not willing to behold with steady eye the divine rays, the unbelieving woman is pleased to cohabit with the believing man, or the unbelieving man with the believing woman, let them not be separated, according to the divine Apostle, ‘for the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife and the unbelieving wife by her husband.’”

In that case, the Church does not speak of a “*sheep be joined with the wolf*” but of one spouse “*sanctifying*” the other. To sum this all up I would say that (the real,

original) Judaism and Orthodox Christianity (the latter being a continuation of the former) place an immense emphasis on the Truth, on never placing the True and the False on the same level, on never obfuscating the differences between two different teachings.

In contrast, most modern Christian denominations couldn't care less about any truth, be it historical, dogmatic or even factual.

[Sidebar: by "Truth" I mean something very specific. My spiritual father recently defined it as such: "*Truth is not a relative abstract but a cognitive monument formed by revealed absolutes*" and that is as good a definition as I have ever seen]

I even believe that most modern Christian denominations have simply given up on the very concept of "truth" altogether. Their sole concern is expediency really - some vague idea of "practical" as opposed to what is "theoretical", such as any discussion of what the truth might be.

For example, modern Ecumenists will always proclaim that they believe in the same God, the same Trinity, and the same Mother of God and that they therefore "recognize the validity of the Mysteries (called "Sacraments" in the West) of the other Ecumenists. Contrast that with the difference between the Orthodox and the Gnostics and Arians which could be summed up in two words which differ from each other only by, literally, a tiny letter iota: "*homousios*" versus "*homiouios*" (the former meaning "of the same substance" and the latter "of a similar substance"). Early Christians died because of this "tiny" difference! You can imagine what they would say if they saw Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis hugging each other and calling each other "[brothers in the Christian faith](#)"!

(http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/12/joint_declaration_of_pope_francis_and_patriarch_kirill/1208117)

Again, the point is not to discuss the difference between "same" and "similar" substances, but to contrast the difference in approach to issues of faith between early Christians and modern "official" religious leaders.

[Sidebar: This uniquely Christian form of "intolerance" was really bewildering to the pagan Romans who were far more similar to our modern Ecumenists. Most people don't realize that pagan Romans never asked Christians to give up

their faith. Neither did they want to force them to pray only to the Roman gods. "All" they wanted was for the Christians to also "honor" the Roman God by bringing them a small sacrifice, sometimes as small as just adding a few coals to the fire of a Roman god. And yet, the early Christians stubbornly refused such seemingly "small" gestures which they viewed as an apostasy because it equated false god with the One Real God. They chose horrible tortures and death rather than even give the external impression that they accepted the reality of Roman gods. Even those Christians who did not accept to offer a sacrifice to a Roman god but who obtained a certificate stating that they had done so were referred to as "*libellatici*" ("certificate holders") and considered as "lapsed" from the Church!]

So yes, it is true that modern Christians do not care about "obscure theological matters" and that is precisely what makes them so different from the True Christians of the early Church and those Orthodox Christians today who still hold the traditions "which have been passed on to them *whether by word or in writing*" (2 Thes 2:15) and who still remember that even if "*an angel from heaven*" would preach a "*different gospel*" to them that they should reject him as "*accursed*" (Gal 1:8).

While for original Christians "obscure theological matters" were important enough to be tortured to death for, for modern "post-Christian Christians" they were basically irrelevant. They have long forgotten the warning from God "*because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit thee out of my mouth*" (Rev 3:16) and all they care for is the external unity of Christian denomination, never mind if they hold mutually exclusive theological views or even, no theological views at all like the amazing [Unitarian Universalists](#) (aka the "youyoohs") (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unitarian_Universalism) who embody syncretism led to its logical conclusion.

The ethos of YOLO and DILLIGAF

At the end of the day, all these modern "decaf denominations" which have really done away with "intolerance" and "zealotry" result in a society where nobody gives a damn anymore, a society where the anti-spirituality of the ethos [YOLO](#)

(<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Yolo>)

and [DILLIGAF](#)

(<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=DILLIGAF>)

provide the basis for endless consumerism and general stupidification. This is the kind of anti-religion which the New World Order needs – a religion which would unite all of mankind into a single, vapid, shapeless mass serving the NWO and its 1% leaders by consuming, obeying and never asking a question, especially about what is or is not true. This is why the powers that be and the media put such an effort into promoting these “official” religions and why they constantly fawn over their leaders.

Think of it – does it not strike you as paradoxical that Christ said

“If the world hates you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:18-19)

and yet the very same corporate media who serves the AngloZionist Empire and its planned New World Order also would give putatively “Christian” leaders the kind of coverage which normally goes to Rock stars?

When was the last time you ever heard one of those "superstar religious leaders" dare to denounce the modern rulers of our world as the genocidal mass murderers they are or simply as hypocrites? But no, they meet with them and they hug, they smile, they kiss – each time a big love fest. Long gone is the time when Christian leaders had the courage to openly criticize an Empress (like Saint John Chrysostom) or dare to speak to a modern leader like Saint Philip II, Metropolitan of Moscow, who refused to bless the Czar Ivan the Terrible after a church service and instead publicly castigated him in the following words:

“I don't recognize the Orthodox Czar anymore. I don't recognize him in his rule, O Lord! We are here bringing a sacrifice to God, while behind the alter the blood of innocent Christians is shed. Since the sun shines in the sky it has never been seen or heard that a pious Czar would outrage his own kingdom in such a way! Even if the most impious and pagan kingdoms there is the rule of law and the Truth, and there is mercy towards the people, but not in Russia! You are high on your throne, but there is an Almighty Judge above you. How will you face his judgment? Covered in the blood of the innocent, made deaf by the sound of their tortured screams? Even the stones under your feet are demanding vengeance O Lord! I am telling you as a pastor of souls – fear the One God!”

Can you imagine an Orthodox Patriarch or a Latin Pope addressing, say, Obama with such words? And while Saint Philip was eventually tortured and murdered for his courage, modern Patriarchs and Popes incur no such risks. And yet they remain silent: they see nothing, hear nothing and, above all, say nothing. YOLO and DILLIGAF indeed...

This is why the Empire and the New World Order loves them.

Conclusion – what religion is not

I have tried to show the various reasons why I consider that most of what is called “religion” today is nothing of the kind. We live in a world of pseudo-everything, an “Empire of Illusions” to borrow Chris Hedges’ expression. Original Christianity was an intensely mystical faith, one which centered on prayer and asceticism, which lead to an intensely personal experience of God and [His uncreated energies](#)

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Essence-Energies_distinction_\(Eastern_Orthodox_theology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Essence-Energies_distinction_(Eastern_Orthodox_theology)))

and which was never detached from a zealous determination to preserve the purity of the original faith “*which the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers*“. Early Christian monasticism is a perfect example of this “symphony” between individual spiritual struggles and public action in defense of the faith: while in normal times monastics lived in remote locations and deserts, they always left their secluded dwellings to enter the city and publicly defy and condemn any heresy. In modernist Orthodox denominations this kind of individual responsibility has been replaced with a “keep praying, shut up and mind your business” attitude (I have witnessed that myself in the Russian Orthodox Church as recently as the 2000-2007 time period).

Truly, the state of religions today is a sad one and you will not hear me defend it. Christ warned about that when he said “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men” (Mat 5:13). Yes, sure, the modernists currently control all the holy places (ancient churches and cathedrals), courtesy of secular police forces who are more than happy to evict “non-official” denominations from their places of worship, but this was also predicted by Christ when he spoke of the “abomination of desolation” in the “holy place” (Mat 24:15). There is probably nothing much we, the simple people, can do about that. But what we can do is

remember the “real thing” and never allow the modern “verisimilitudinous Christianity” to take its place in our hearts and minds. Finally, we should always remember the words of Christ who told us that His Church was “the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim 3:15) and that “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mat 16:18). This means that no matter how ugly and even horrible our situation becomes, God will never let His Church truly disappear from our world. Somewhere, maybe only in a small corner of our planet, His Church will always survive, faithful to the Church of the Apostles and the Fathers, unchanged by all the persecutions and slow motion descent into apostasy of the rest of the world. And if somebody really wants to find this Church, he/she will. This is also a promise Christ made to all of us: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” (Mat 5:6).

PS: I fully realize that the above will deeply irritate and offend some readers. My views are the expression of a culture and a faith which is long gone. You can [think of me as an “alien”](http://thesaker.is/a-small-reminder-and-clarification-i-am-an-alien-really/) (http://thesaker.is/a-small-reminder-and-clarification-i-am-an-alien-really/) if you want. I have to warn you that the only criticism I really fear is if you told me that in the above I misrepresented the true and original mindset, or *phronema*, of the Church Fathers and of the Early Christians. If I am guilty of that, then I sincerely apologize and repent for it. But if I ruffled the feathers or rattled the cages of the modern “post-Christian Christians” and of the usual gang of religion-hating secularists, then so be it! This is not a popularity contest but simply my personal witness to my readers. Like in an AA meeting, you can take or leave any or all of it :-)

Why Orthodox Churches are still used as pawns in political games

April 27, 2018

First, a disclaimer: today I am going to touch upon a subject which is intensely painful for me and which will get quite a lot of my readers angry at me. Frankly, I did everything I could, not to discuss this issue on the blog, because I know, out of my personal experience, that discussing this topic is mostly futile and typically gets a lot of hostile reactions. This is made even worse by the fact that to be able to discuss this issue requires a certain level of knowledge in various subject matters which most people have only a very superficial familiarity with (if that). Finally, this topic is often debated in a nasty and vindictive manner and I have no desire whatsoever to contribute to that. And yet, there comes a time when I cannot remain silent, especially when I am constantly asked what my position on this topic is. At the end of the day, I have to follow my conscience and this conscience tells me that now is the time to put down in writing that which I mostly have tried to keep to myself, primarily because I did not see the point in publicly discussing it.

By now most of you must have heard that [Poroshenko and the Ukrainian Rada have made an official request to the Patriarch of Constantinople to grant the Ukrainian Orthodox Church its full “autocephaly”](#) (i.e. independence from the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate).

(<https://www.unian.info/politics/10090592-constantinople-starts-procedure-of-granting-autocephaly-to-ukrainian-orthodox-church-poroshenko.html> Right there, in the preceding sentence, there are a lot of assumptions which are invalid and a lot of terms which are not defined and are, therefore, ambiguous at best.

To really be able to understand what is really at stake here you would need, at a very minimum, to have a basic but solid understanding of the following topics:

1. Orthodox ecclesiology (probably the hardest topic to get a grasp of)
2. The history of Orthodoxy in the territory called “the Ukraine” today

3. The history of the Russian Orthodox Church between the 16th and 19th century
4. The history of the Russian Orthodox Church during the early 20th century
5. A good understanding of what the Moscow Patriarchate today really is (its nature, status, role, how it functions, etc.) and what its historical and theological roots are
6. A basic understanding of the history of the Orthodox Churches under Ottoman occupation

I am very sorry to say that I cannot offer even a short summary of these topics here simply because there is no way of shortly summarizing them. For those interested, I did touch upon these topics in the past, especially in [this](https://thesaker.is/russia-and-islam-part-two-russian-orthodoxy/) article (https://thesaker.is/russia-and-islam-part-two-russian-orthodoxy/) and in [this](https://thesaker.is/a-negative-view-of-christianity-and-religion-in-general/) article (https://thesaker.is/a-negative-view-of-christianity-and-religion-in-general/). I strongly recommend you read them to get at least a sense of what I am going to be touching upon below.

To say that this topic is very complex is an understatement. Sadly, very few Orthodox Christians nowadays have the kind of basic knowledge needed to develop an informed opinion about this. Not by their fault, by the way, but simply because the level of religious literacy (taken broadly) has been in free fall for many decades, including among the Orthodox people.

So what I want to begin with here are a number of “bullet point” observations which I want to share with you “as is”, without going into the kind of deeper analysis every single one of them would deserve. What I hope to achieve is just to give a sense of the issues involved and to convince you that things are nowhere nearly as simple and black and white as some would like them to be.

First a few historical bullet-points

- First, I want to immediately set aside any discussion of Orthodox ecclesiology. Besides, 99.9999% of those discussing this issue today do not really refer to Orthodox ecclesiological arguments anyway (even when they pretend to), so there is no point in arguing about this from this perspective. I will just say that a reasonable case can be made that the territory of what is today the Ukraine should be considered separately from

the rest of Russia. Simply put, the history of Orthodoxy in southwestern Russia (roughly what we think of as the Ukraine today) and northeastern Russia (roughly what we think of as Russia today) between the 13th and 18th century have been dramatically different: the Orthodox people in these regions had to live, and sometimes survive, in very different circumstances, overcoming very different crises and, for a long while, they lived in dramatically different realities (primarily thanks to the Lithuanian and Polish occupation of western Russia and the systematic anti-Orthodox policies of the Vatican and its agents). Yes, Orthodoxy in the Ukraine and Russia have the same root, but then their paths took them along very different roads, so to speak.

- Second, the Russian Orthodox Church underwent a dramatic and bloody internal schism during the 17th century (the so-called “Old Rite” schism) which saw the state (not so much the Church!) violently crush the opposition. This left deep wounds inside the Russian society and these events deeply alienated the masses of the Russian people against their leaders.
- Third, the Russian Orthodox Church lost her independence and was gradually subordinated to the Russian state since, at least, the reforms of Czar Peter I (called “The Great” by westernizers) who reigned from 1682 to 1725. Furthermore, starting with Peter I, Russian ruling classes were gradually replaced with “imported” West European elites, which only further alienated the common Russian people.
- Fourth, much of the Ukraine was liberated from the Polish Latin yoke by Catherine II (also called “The Great” by westernizers) who reigned from 1762 to 1796. However, by liberating the Ukraine, Catherine also inherited a population which included a large number of westernized elites, both Orthodox and Latin, and a huge Jewish population.
- By the late 19th early 20th century the Russian elites were largely secularized and westernized while the traditional Orthodox *ethos* was severely disrupted inside the Russian society at large. Furthermore, there were very diverse movements inside the Russian Orthodox Church ranging from [hesychastic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hesychasm) monasticism (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hesychasm>) (I think of [Saint Theophan the Recluse](#))

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theophan_the_Recluse) to rabid modernism (which resulted in the “[living church](#)” movement).

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Living_Church) This created severe internal tensions inside the Russian Orthodox Church.

- The Bolshevik Revolution resulted in massive and genocidal religious persecutions against all religions in Russia, especially against Orthodox Christians which the Bolsheviks saw as 1) class enemies, 2) crypto-monarchists, 3) anti-Semites, 4) subversives 5) reactionaries 6) supporters of Grand-Russian chauvinism.



Orthodox clergymen in the first Soviet concentration camp in the “[Solovetsky Special Designation Camp](#)” (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solovki_prison_camp) (late 1920s)

- As a result of vicious and widespread religious persecutions, at least four distinct groups appeared among Russian Orthodox Christians: 1) those who fled abroad 2) those who openly opposed the new regime 3) those who went into hiding 4) those who fully embraced the new regime. The first group left Russia and eventually founded the so-called “Russian Orthodox Church Abroad”. The second group (often called the “Josephites” after their leader Met. Joseph of Petrograd) was completely exterminated. The third group (the so-called “Catacomb Church”) split into many small subgroups and survived until our days, albeit with great difficulties and in very small numbers. The fourth group formed the basis of what is known

today as the “Moscow Patriarchate” which today represents the overwhelming majority of Orthodox Christians in Russia.

- During the Soviet era, the Moscow Patriarchate became the loyal instrument and supporter of the state in exchange for the exclusive control of all parishes, monasteries, cathedrals, seminaries, etc. The Department of External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate was basically run by the KGB and while the rank and file faithful had no choice which Russian Orthodox parish to attend, the Soviet state was in full control of the Moscow Patriarchate. This is what the famous Russian singer Igor Talkov, later murdered, referred to when he sang in his famous song “[Globe](#)” *“Show me such a country, Where the churches are boarded up, Where the priest hides under his cassock, KGB epaulettes”* (Покажите мне такую страну, Где заколочены храмы, Где священник скрывает под рясой, КГБ-шный погон).
- In 1991, following the end of the Soviet era, the Moscow Patriarchate initially was challenged in its legitimacy by various groups of people, but with every passing year the Russian state under Eltsin and then Putin regained full control of the Moscow Patriarchate and a wave of repressions was unleashed against those small, but surprisingly numerous, Orthodox Christians groups who challenged the legitimacy of the Moscow Patriarchate.
- In 2007, the majority of the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, allured by a strong sense of religious revival in Russia and a completely secular type of patriotism, reunited with the Moscow Patriarchate thereby conferring upon it a degree of legitimacy it had never enjoyed in the past.
- In the Ukraine, officially independent since 1991, the situation remained far more fluid and a number of schisms occurred creating at least two versions of an “independent” Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The Latin Uniats also played a key role in the re-ignition of Ukrainian nationalism and even though most Orthodox bishops in the Ukraine remained under the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, the pressure began to remove this “Moskal” jurisdiction and replace it by a “purely Ukrainian” one.

- The main problem with the so-called “Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate” (a self-proclaimed and therefore completely illegitimate ecclesiastical body) is that it is a pure product of the Moscow Patriarchate. Its founder, Metropolitan Filaret (read about him [here](#)), was even considered a likely candidate to become Patriarch of Russia, this is might seem outright bizarre, but this is true. It gets even more surreal – in 1990 the Moscow Patriarchate actually gave the Ukrainians a bizarre status of “autonomy” (but not quite independence) thus creating something called the “[Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate](#)”, not to be confused with the “[Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate](#)” or, for that matter, with the “[Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church](#)” (all three are “sort of” official in the Ukraine).
- As for the Latins and their Uniats, they have played a key role both during Bandera’s years in WWII and then in the resurgence of Ukronazi nationalism since 1991. They are one of the key factions of the Ukronazi regime in power since the coup in 2014 (the Poles and the Latins have always attacked Russia every time they perceived her as weakened by some internal or external problem; this is really nothing new).

Next, the term “canonical” and its misuses

There is a term which you will hear used a lot by all sides in this, and other, disputes. This term is “canonical”. Originally, the word “canon” simply means “measure” or “rule”. The correct modern meaning of the word “canonical” should be, but is not, “in accordance with, or in harmony/compliance with, the canons”, i.e. in conformity with the praxis and rules agreed upon by the [Church Fathers](#) (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Church_Fathers) and which were proclaimed by local and ecumenical Church Councils. Alas, this is not AT ALL what the word “canonical” means nowadays. Nowadays, the word canonical is used as an equivalent/substitute for “official” or “officially recognized” or even “majority endorsed”. From a strictly Orthodox point of view, this is an absolutely absurd interpretation of the notion of canonical since there were MANY times in Church history when the secular rulers backed heretical bishops and when most bishops had fallen into heresy (the times of [Saint Maximos the Confessor and the Monothelite heresy](#) come to mind). (<https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/01/life-of-st-maximus-confessor.html> This misunderstanding of the word “canonical” is a sad witness to the deep state of

secularization which so many putatively “Orthodox” Churches have undergone. But it gets even worse. Since many, or even most, “official” Orthodox churches have some very serious problems with their legitimacy and/or with their compliance with Church canons and traditions, they came up with a new trick: they confer “canonicity” upon each other. That is, one illegitimate bishop or Church declares itself the “only canonical one” in region A; another does the same in region B, and then they recognize each other and together proclaim themselves as “the only canonical” bishops/Churches worldwide. Conversely, those who do not have the support of secular powers and who cannot use the local riot police to seize parishes or monasteries are therefore decreed as “uncanonical” and dismissed as “fringe extremists”. From a purely Patristic point of view, this is all totally nonsensical and if anything, sheds a great deal of doubt upon the putative “canonicity” of the self-proclaimed “canonical” bishops or Churches. Let me give you just one example:

The 3rd Canon of the 7th Ecumenical Council [says](#):

Every appointment of a bishop, or of a presbyter, or of a deacon made by (civil) rulers shall remain void in accordance with the Canon which says: “If any bishop comes into possession of a church by employing secular rulers, let him be deposed from office, and let him be excommunicated. And all those who communicate with him too.”

All the most authoritative interpreters of canons ([Aristenos](#), (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexios_Aristenos) [Balsamon](#), (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Balsamon) [Zonaras](#)) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joannes_Zonaras) agree that this canon categorically forbids the appointment of bishops by the interference of secular powers. In fact, the Canon quoted in this Canon is the 31st Apostolic Canon and says exactly the same thing:

If any bishop makes use of the rulers of this world, and by their means obtains to be a bishop of a church, let him be deprived and suspended, and all that communicate with him.

Pretty clear, no? This is what the Apostles themselves decreed! And yet it is undeniable that in many Orthodox countries nowadays (and in the past) bishops have their [bishopric](#) (<https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/bishopric>) primarily, and often solely, by the intervention of secular state rulers. Christ said “*my kingdom is not of this world*” so how can the support of the (often secular and even atheistic) powers that be confer

legitimacy aka “canonicity” upon modern bishops?! In reality, this practice itself is completely uncanonical!

The sad reality is that none of the so-called “Orthodox Churches” involved in the current dispute in the Ukraine have a “canonical leg” to stand on. While from a political or secular point of view, some might appear to be preferable to others, from a strictly canonical and Christian (Patristic) point of view, they are all illegitimate, to begin with.

What the various Ukrainian nationalistic Churches are doing now to the “Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate” is absolutely no different at all from what the Moscow Patriarchate did to the Josephites or the Catacomb Church and what the Moscow Patriarchate is still doing nowadays to the various small groups who refuse to recognize the Moscow Patriarchate and who often refer to themselves as “True Orthodox” (for the latest example of such persecution those of you who read Russian can see [these articles](https://pastebin.com/zKMkQrw9)) (<https://pastebin.com/zKMkQrw9>). During the Soviet era, those belonging to such “True Orthodox” groups were simply jailed. During the 1990s the Russian riot police OMON was sent many times to seize churches, monasteries and other buildings run by Russian “True” Orthodox Christians whose only “sin” was to refuse to recognize the legitimacy of the Moscow Patriarchate. Yet the victims of those persecutions are now called “uncanonical” whereas their persecutors are “canonical”. Go figure...

Now back to politics

The sad truth is this: both in the Ukraine and in Russia the official (aka “canonical”) Orthodox Church is but an instrument in a larger toolkit of state power. In both countries the “official” Church embodies primarily national, not spiritual or theological, categories and while in Russia the current ruler is one of the most capable ones in the history of Russia (which cannot be said about the Uberloser Poroshenko), this was also the case under Eltsin (one of the worst people to ever rule over Russia) and all his Communist predecessors and this will probably remain the case for the foreseeable future regardless of who sits in the Kremlin.

I submit that when the Church is subservient to the state this is by definition extremely bad, even if the ruler of the day just so happens to be a very good one. But never mind my opinion. The Apostles and the Church Fathers all unanimously held that the Church cannot be subjected to the secular powers. At best, when the secular

power is truly Orthodox, they can function together “in agreement” (symphony) one protecting and one guiding the other. But the Church should always remain the conscience of the secular leader, not his or her butler.

In my article entitled “[A negative view of Christianity and religion in general](http://www.unz.com/tsaker/a-negative-view-of-christianity-and-religion-in-general/)” (<http://www.unz.com/tsaker/a-negative-view-of-christianity-and-religion-in-general/>) I wrote something which I would like to repeat here because I believe it to be absolutely crucial:

Think of it – does it not strike you as paradoxical that Christ said

“If the world hates you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:18-19)

and yet the very same corporate media who serve the AngloZionist Empire and its planned New World Order also would give putatively “Christian” leaders the kind of coverage which normally goes to Rock stars?

When was the last time you ever heard one of those “superstar religious leaders” dare to denounce the modern rulers of our world as the genocidal mass murderers they are, or even simply as hypocrites? But no, they meet with them and they hug, they smile, they kiss – each time a big love fest. Long gone is the time when Christian leaders had the courage to openly criticize an Empress (like Saint John Chrysostom) or dare to speak to a modern leader like Saint Philip II, Metropolitan of Moscow, who refused to bless the Czar Ivan the Terrible after a church service and instead publicly castigated him in the following words:

I don't recognize the Orthodox Czar anymore. I don't recognize him in his rule, O Lord! We are here bringing a sacrifice to God, while behind the alter the blood of innocent Christians is shed. Since the sun shines in the sky it has never been seen or heard that a pious Czar would outrage his own kingdom in such a way! Even in the most impious and pagan kingdoms there is the rule of law and the Truth, and there is mercy towards the people, but not in Russia! You are high on your throne, but there is an Almighty Judge above you. How will you face his judgment? Covered in the blood of the innocent, made deaf by the sound of their

tortured screams? Even the stones under your feet are demanding vengeance O Lord! I am telling you as a pastor of souls – fear the One God!

Can you imagine an Orthodox Patriarch or a Latin Pope addressing, say, Obama with such words? And while Saint Philip was eventually tortured and murdered for his courage, modern Patriarchs and Popes incur no such risks. And yet they remain silent: they see nothing, hear nothing and, above all, they say nothing.

This is not a uniquely Russian or Orthodox problem, by the way. My Muslim friends tell me that they have exactly the same problems with many of their religious leaders in Russia. And not only in Russia, we also see the same abject subservience of so many supposed “Islamic” scholars to the House of Saud. And I won’t even mention western Christian denominations here, who are all integral to the Empire on too many levels to count.

In this context, what are the Ukronazis actually really up to?

In reality, they are doing two very basic and potentially dangerous things:

1. They are provoking Russia by any and all available means (see [the recent seizure of a Russian fishing vessel in the Sea of Azov](https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/494645.html))
(<https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/494645.html>)
2. They are demonstrating their utility (russophobic credentials) to their AngloZionist patrons

These, along with many other signs, are indicators that a war is in the making and that sooner rather than later the Ukronazis will attack the Donbass and try to force the Russian Federation to openly intervene militarily to prevent the Ukronazis from doing to the Novorussians what the Croats and Albanians did to the Serbs in the Serbian Krajina and in Kosovo (or what Saakashvili attempted to do with South Ossetia). The current campaign to declare the “Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate” as an “enemy organization” of the “occupier” is just one more way to create tensions and prepare the public opinion for the inevitable violent climax. The fact that none of the Churches involved in this conflict have any true (canonical) legitimacy won’t make this less tragic and, and probably violent, for the people involved. As usual, the common people will pay the price while the fat cats on all sides will do just fine, thank you.

This is really a sad and tragic situation. The overwhelming majority of the people on both sides are both sincere and misled, and their best feelings are used in what is a very dangerous political game by people who themselves will never have to suffer for their faith (or lack thereof).

Debunking the “Orthodox Pope” myth

Here I need to begin by debunking a misconception: there is no such thing as an “Orthodox Pope” or some “Eastern Pope”. The entire concept of the Papacy is a Frankish notion forcefully (and brutally) imposed upon the Western Romans by their Frankish occupiers. However, the fact that no such thing exists does not prevent some Orthodox bishops from dreaming about it (pride is a core component of our fallen human nature). I will try to clarify this issue in the simplest possible terms.

All bishops are successors to the 12 Apostles and although some of them have left a deeper mark in the history of the Church than others, there was no hierarchy among them. The famous “*thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church*” (Matthew 16:18) refers not to Peter himself, but to his confession “*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*” just spoken by Peter in the previous verse. That was the Patristic consensus (*consensus patrum*) interpretation during the first 1000 years of Christianity (yes, even in the West). If anything, it was Saint James which was the first bishop of Jerusalem, and Saint Paul who, while not even part of the 12 Apostles, was the main interpreter of Christ’s teachings. The Apostles, who were assisted in their works by presbyters/priests, then further consecrated more bishops. Some of them had their see in regular towns, others in major important cities and capitals. The titles of “Archbishop” or “Metropolitan” or “Patriarch” simply refer to bishops whose see is in a major capital city (“Pope”, which just means “Father”, was the one used for the Patriarch of Rome). These are purely *administrative* titles and do not indicate any qualitative differences. Needless to say, the bishop of the Roman Empire’s capital was considered as holding the most important position as he spoke to the Emperor on behalf of the Christian people. When in the 5th century the city of Rome was sacked and eventually fell the Western Roman Empire collapsed. But in the east, the Roman civilization survived by a full 1000 years. When in the 11th century the Pope in Rome decided that he was a super-bishop (1054) which had the authority to impose his absolute rule over the entire Christian world (see the infamous 1075 [Dictatus Papae](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dictatus_Papae)) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dictatus_papae) the rest of the Christian world categorically rejected such an anti-Patristic innovation and, since the first, original

Rome (the city) had first fallen to the Franks and then lapsed into apostasy, the Patriarch of Constantinople found himself to be the bishop of the eastern (and only surviving) capital of the Roman Empire: Constantinople. However, and this is crucial, unlike the western Pope who claimed to be the “Vicar of Christ” and some super-bishop (a *pontifex maximus*) (<http://www.biblicalcatholic.com/apologetics/a104.htm>), the Patriarch of Constantinople did not make any such claims of primacy just because he happened to be the bishop in the imperial capital (nowadays his official title is a modest “His Most Divine All-Holiness the Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch” – more about that below). Then, when in the 15th century, Constantinople was invaded by the Ottomans, the Roman empire truly came to an end. So, at that moment in time, which should have been considered the most important city in the Christian world? Some in Russia felt that Moscow had become the “Third Rome” (especially after the [False Union of Florence](#) in 1439) (<http://saintandrewgoc.org/home/2014/1/20/saint-mark-of-ephesus-and-the-false-council-in-florence.html>), an ecclesiologically speaking controversial proposition, but which was greatly strengthened over time when Russia became the biggest, strongest, richest Orthodox country on the planet (most others were under Ottoman occupation) and the Russian population (and military might) was much larger than the one of any other Orthodox country.

You see where this is heading, right? The Patriarch of Constantinople used to be the “first among equals” for 1000 years, but now the Patriarch of Moscow was threatening this status, especially since the former was truly ruling over just one neighborhood of Istanbul (the [Phanar](#)) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fener,_Fatih). Without going into further details (like the attempts of the Patriarch of Constantinople to present himself as the head of all the various Orthodox diasporas worldwide), let’s just say that there is not much love lost between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Moscow Patriarchate. Both sides try to keep things civil, but there are cyclical tensions and regular outright disputes.

The reality is that even if we accept the notion that Moscow was the Third Rome, that status ended for Moscow in 1917, just as it ended for the Second Rome in 1453 and for the First Rome in 476. In fact, no Patriarch, Archbishop, Metropolitan or Bishop can today lay a claim to any “primacy of honor”, especially when most of them have their reputation soiled by their participation in the so-called Ecumenical Movement, their abandonment of the Church Calendar, their subservience to the secular powers, etc. In truth, the Orthodox world is undergoing a deep crisis on many

levels and there is something profoundly indecent about these fights for some primacy of honor at a time when the majority of the population of historically Orthodox countries is only very superficially religious, if that. If there is no such thing as an “Orthodox Pope” there sure are a lot of Orthodox bishops acting as if they wanted to become one (hence the “historical” meetings, with hugs and all, between the Latin Pope and the Orthodox Patriarchs and wannabe-Popes).

Introducing another toxic phenomenon: (ethno-)phyletism

Things are made even worse by the outright nasty streak of nationalism infecting many Orthodox Churches.

The sad reality is that we live in a post-Christian world. This is also true for nominally “Orthodox” countries such as Russia, Greece or Serbia where truly religious people constitute a minority and where being “Orthodox” is primarily a national, patriotic category (at least for most people). Some even call themselves “culturally Orthodox”. These people ought not to be dismissed by the way. They are participants in what is undeniably a spiritual revival and when they conflate national/ethnic categories with spiritual ones it is often because their nation or ethnicity has been persecuted, often viciously. But when spiritual and theological categories and language are used to cover up political and secular goals, this is the time to speak up and denounce this farce for what it is: a gross misrepresentation of what true (Patristic) Christianity truly stands for and embodies.

Christian ecclesiology rejects the notion that each ethnic group ought to have its own, separate Church. This idea, that each ethnic group ought to have its own separate Church, is called “phyletism” or, sometimes, “ethno-phyletism” and is an already condemned heresy. (<https://ocf.org/the-1872-council-of-constantinople-and-phyletism/>) Yes, since the Apostolic times there have been local Churches, but all these Churches were administratively autonomous for practical purposes. But in theological terms, there can be only One Church and the local Churches are simply autonomously self-organized parts of the single One Church. As for ethnicity and nationality, these are modern categories which are not even part of the Patristic theological language. And while there is nothing wrong with the French praying in French, or the Japanese in Japanese, or the Congolese in Lingala, and they all should have their own priest and bishops, and while liturgical rites have naturally and organically evolved and incorporated elements of various local cultures, the idea of the

primacy of an ethnic identity over the unity of all Orthodox Christians is fundamentally wrong. This is why the Scripture says

“Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, or free, but Christ is all and is in all” (Col 3:11) and “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28) and “One Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph 4:5) and “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal 3:7).

In theological terms, all Christians, regardless of their ethnic origin and culture, form one single “Body” with many “members” all united by the same faith and their participation in the life of the Church, which is the Theandric Body of Christ.

Ideally, there should be one bishop in each region/province and all of these bishops united in local councils which themselves should be united into only one Church church of our entire planet. In the real world, with all its wars, millions of displaced refugees, vicious anti-religious repressions and members of many different cultures living in one country (as in, for example, the USA) this ideal has been very difficult to achieve. The individual ambitions of some less than spiritually-inclined bishops have just made things worse.

Summary: a very difficult situation but also reasons to keep hoping

The reality is that in most Orthodox countries, including Russia and the Ukraine, the majority of the people are “Orthodox” primarily in a cultural and even national sense. Centuries of subservience to the secular state have made many local Orthodox churches tools in the hands of politicians. There is an ugly competition for power and influence among many of the local Orthodox Churches, and especially between Constantinople and Moscow. Most putatively “Orthodox” Churches and jurisdictions have been deeply infected by modernism, secularism, national (identity) politics and are now actors in political struggles in many countries. The words “*my kingdom is not of this world*” (John 18:36) have been forgotten by many, if not most, Orthodox bishops.

That is not to say that there is not a real spiritual revival in countries like Russia. There is. But it is also true that this revival often takes place in spite of the attitudes of “official” religious leaders (that goes both for Orthodoxy and for Islam). Still, bad as this situation is, it should be assessed in the larger historical context: in one way or

another, the Church has always been undergoing crises and persecutions during almost every year since Her foundation. Many of those crises took centuries to be resolved. So the fact that so much looks bleak today should not discourage anybody. There is really nothing new under the sun.

Still, the very real spiritual revival in Russia (and in other Orthodox countries) is still in its early stages and while things are generally heading in the right direction, there is a lot of “mental ground” to be reconquered before most people return to the spiritual roots (or *phronema*) of the true, original, Christianity. Eventually, the Orthodox Churches will have to regain their full autonomy from the secular powers, not just in grand statements and words, but in reality. This is a long road, it will probably take many decades, if not more, to heal from the devastating consequences of the terrible events (and ideological dead-ends) of the 20th century. But as Russians (and others) rediscover the true history of their countries, I believe that this is bound to happen.

Conclusion

I wish I could have presented a simple, optimistic picture here, with on one side, the totally evil Ukrainians and on the other, the noble and heroic Russians. Alas, the reality is much more complex and, frankly, much uglier. The fight over which side gets to declare itself THE “Ukrainian Orthodox Church” is an ugly one and while, in this case, it is pretty self-evidently obvious who the aggressor is (those supported by the Ukronazi nationalists), any serious analysis of the historical context for this dispute will inevitably yield a much more complex picture. It is my personal conviction that as long as Orthodox Churches are controlled by bishops who are much more concerned with pleasing Caesar (Matthew 22:21) than they are with pleasing God, political and nationalist consideration will continue to pollute the spiritual realm. I hope that the example of Saint Philip II, Metropolitan of Moscow mentioned above, and the millions of Orthodox New Martyrs who died in the 20th century, will inspire a new generation of Orthodox hierarchs who will eventually replace the current Soviet-era faithful servants of the state (regardless of who is in power) and who will return to the true faith “*which the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers. On this was the Church founded; and if anyone departs from this, he neither is nor any longer ought to be called a Christian*” (St. Athanasius).

The Saker

The Empire splits the Orthodox world – possible consequences

October 19, 2018



In previous articles about this topic I have tried to set the context and explain [why most Orthodox Churches are still used as pawns in purely political machinations](http://www.unz.com/tsaker/why-orthodox-churches-are-still-used-as-pawns-in-political-games/) (http://www.unz.com/tsaker/why-orthodox-churches-are-still-used-as-pawns-in-political-games/) and how the [most commentators who discuss these issues today are using words and concepts in a totally twisted, secular and non-Christian way](http://www.unz.com/tsaker/the-abomination-of-desolation-standing-in-the-holy-place/) (http://www.unz.com/tsaker/the-abomination-of-desolation-standing-in-the-holy-place/) (which is about as absurd as discussing medicine while using a vague, misunderstood and generally non-medical terminology). I have also written articles trying to explain how [the concept of “Church” is completely misunderstood nowadays and how many Orthodox Churches today have lost their original Patristic mindset.](http://www.unz.com/tsaker/a-negative-view-of-christianity-and-religion-in-general/) (http://www.unz.com/tsaker/a-negative-view-of-christianity-and-religion-in-general/) Finally, I have tried to show [the ancient spiritual roots of modern russophobia](http://www.unz.com/tsaker/the-ancient-spiritual-roots-of-russophobia/) (http://www.unz.com/tsaker/the-ancient-spiritual-roots-of-russophobia/) and how the [AngloZionist Empire might try to save the Ukronazi regime in Kiev by triggering a religious crisis in the Ukraine.](http://www.unz.com/tsaker/us-options-in-the-ukraine-trigger-a-religious-war/) (http://www.unz.com/tsaker/us-options-in-the-ukraine-trigger-a-religious-war/) It is my hope that these articles will provide a useful

context to evaluate and discuss the current crisis between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Moscow Patriarchate.

My intention today is to look at the unfolding crisis from a more “modern” point of view and try to evaluate only what the **political** and **social** consequences of the latest developments might be in the short and mid term. I will begin by a short summary.

The current context: a summary

The Patriarchate of Constantinople has taken the official decision to:

1. Declare that the Patriarch of Constantinople has the right to unilaterally grant autocephaly (full independence) to any other Church with no consultations with any the other Orthodox Churches.
2. Cancel the decision by the Patriarch of Constantinople Dionysios IV in 1686 transferring the Kiev Metropolia (religious jurisdiction overseen by a Metropolitan) to the Moscow Patriarchate (a decision which no Patriarch of Constantinople contested for three centuries!)
3. Lift the anathema pronounced against the “Patriarch” Filaret Denisenko by the Moscow Patriarchate (in spite of the fact that the only authority which can lift an anathema is the one which pronounced it in the first place)
4. Recognize as legitimate the so-called “Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate” which it previously had declared as illegitimate and schismatic.
5. Grant actual grand full autocephaly to a future (and yet to be defined) “united Ukrainian Orthodox Church”

Most people naturally focus on this last element, but this might be a mistake, because while illegally granting autocephaly to a mix of nationalist pseudo-Churches is most definitely a bad decision, to act like some kind of “Orthodox Pope” and claim rights which only belong to the entire Church is truly a historical mistake. Not only that, but this mistake now forces every Orthodox Christian to either accept this as a *fait accompli* and submit to the megalomania of the wannabe Ortho-Pope of the Phanar, or to reject such unilateral and totally illegal action or to enter into open opposition. And this is not the first time such a situation has happened in the history of the Church. I will use an historical parallel to make this point.

The Historical Context:

The Church of Rome and the rest of the Christian world were already on a collision course for several centuries before the famous date of 1054 when Rome broke away from the Christian world. Whereas for centuries Rome had been the most steadfast bastion of resistance against innovations and heresies, the influence of the Franks in the Church of Rome eventually resulted (after numerous zig-zags on this topic) in a truly disastrous decision to add a single word (*filioque* – “and the son” in Latin) (<https://orthodoxwiki.org/Filioque>) to the Symbol of Faith (the *Credo* in Latin). What made that decision even worse was the fact that the Pope of Rome also declared that he had the right to impose that addition upon all the other Christian Churches, with no conciliar discussion or approval. It is often said that the issue of the *filioque* is “obscure” and largely irrelevant, but that is just a reflection of the theological illiteracy of those making such statements as, in reality, the addition of the *filioque* completely overthrows the most crucial and important Trinitarian and Christological dogmas of Christianity. But what *is* true is that the attempt to unilaterally impose this heresy on the rest of the Christian world was at least as offensive and, really, as sacrilegious as the *filioque* itself because it undermined the very nature of the Church. Indeed, the Symbol of Faith defines the Church as “catholic” (Εἰς μίαν, Ἁγίαν, **Καθολικὴν** καὶ Ἀποστολικὴν Ἐκκλησίαν”) meaning not only “universal” but also “whole” or “all-inclusive”. In ecclesiological terms this “universality” is manifested in two crucial ways:

First, all Churches are equal, there is no Pope, no “historical see” granting any primacy just as all the Apostles of Christ and all Orthodox bishops are also equals; the Head of the Church is Christ Himself, and the Church is His Theandric Body filled with the Holy Spirit. Oh I know, to say that the Holy Spirit fills the Church is considered absolutely ridiculous in our 21st century post-Christian world, but check out these words from the Book of Acts: “*For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us*” (Acts 15:28) which clearly show that the members of the Apostolic Council in Jerusalem clearly believed and proclaimed that their decisions were guided by the Holy Spirit. Anyone still believing that will immediately see why the Church needs no “vicar of Christ” or any “earthly representative” to act in Christ’s name during His absence. In fact, Christ Himself clearly told us “*lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen*” (Matt 28:20). If a Church needs a “vicar” – then Christ and the Holy Spirit are clearly not present in that Church. QED.

Second, crucial decisions, decisions which affect the entire Church, are only taken by a Council of the entire Church, not unilaterally by any one man or any one Church. These are really the basics of what could be called “traditional Christian ecclesiology 101” and the blatant violation of this key ecclesiological dogma by the Papacy in 1054 was as much a cause for the historical schism between East and West (really, between Rome and the rest of Christian world) as was the innovation of the *filioque* itself.

I hasten to add that while the Popes were the first ones to claim for themselves an authority only given to the full Church, they were not the only ones (by the way, this is a very good working definition of the term “Papacy”: the attribution to one man of all the characteristics belonging solely to the entire Church). In the early 20th century the Orthodox Churches of Constantinople, Albania, Alexandria, Antioch, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Poland, and Romania got together and, under the direct influence of powerful Masonic lodges, decided to adopt the Gregorian Papal Calendar (named after the 16th century Pope Gregory XIII). The year was 1923, when the entire Russian Orthodox Church was being literally crucified on the modern Golgotha of the Bolshevik regime, but that did not prevent these Churches from calling their meeting “pan Orthodox”. Neither did the fact that the Russian, Serbian, Georgian, Jerusalem Church and the Holy Mountain (aka “[Mount Athos](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Mount_Athos)”)(https://orthodoxwiki.org/Mount_Athos) rejected this innovation stop them. As for the Papal Calendar itself, the innovators “piously” re-branded it as “improved Julian” and other such euphemism to conceal the real intention behind this.

Finally, even the fact that this decision also triggered a wave of divisions *inside* their own Churches was not cause for them to reconsider or, even less so, to repent. Professor C. Troitsky was absolutely correct when [he wrote](#) that “*there is no doubt that future historians of the Orthodox Church will be forced to admit that the Congress of 1923 was the saddest event of Church life in the 20th century*” (http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/photii_1.aspx) (for more on this tragedy see [here](#) (http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/zervakos_calendar.aspx) and [here](#) (http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/ea_calendar.aspx). Here again, one man, Ecumenical Patriarch Meletius IV (Metaxakis) tried to “play Pope” and his actions resulted in a massive upheaval which ripped through the entire Orthodox world.

More recently, the Patriarch of Constantinople tried, once again, to convene what he would want to be an Orthodox “Ecumenical Council” under his personal authority when in 2016 (yet another) “pan Orthodox” council was convened on the island of

Crete which was attended by the Churches of Alexandria , Jerusalem , Serbia , Romania , Cyprus , Greece, Poland , Albania and of the Czech Lands and Slovakia. The Churches of Russia, Bulgaria, Georgia, and Antioch refused to attend (the US OCA – was not invited). Most observers agreed that the Moscow Patriarchate played a key role in undermining what was clearly to be a “robber” council which would have introduced major (and fully non-Orthodox) innovations. The Patriarch of Constantinople never forgave the Russians for torpedoing his planned “ecumenical” council.

Some might have noticed that a majority of local Churches did attend both the 1923 and the 2016 wannabe “pan Orthodox” councils. Such an observation might be very important in a Latin or Protestant context, but in the Orthodox context is absolutely meaningless for the following reasons:

The theological context:

In the history of the Church there have been **many** “robber” councils (meaning illegitimate, false, councils) which were attended by a majority of bishops of the time, and even a majority of the Churches; in [this article](http://thesaker.is/obedience-in-christianity-a-reply-to-an-important-question/) (<http://thesaker.is/obedience-in-christianity-a-reply-to-an-important-question/>) I mentioned the life of Saint Maximos the Confessor (which you can read in full [here](https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/01/life-of-st-maximus-confessor.html)) (<https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/01/life-of-st-maximus-confessor.html>) as a perfect example of how one single person (not even a priest!) can defend true Christianity against what could appear at the time as the overwhelming number of bishops representing the entire Church. But, as always, these false bishops were eventually denounced and the Truth of Orthodoxy prevailed.

Likewise, at the False Union of Florence, when all the Greek delegates signed the union with the Latin heretics, and only one bishop refused to do (Saint Mark of Ephesus), the Latin Pope [declared in despair](http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/stmark.aspx) “*and so we have accomplished nothing!*”. (<http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/stmark.aspx>) He was absolutely correct – that union was rejected by the “Body” of the Church and the names of those apostates who signed it will remain in infamy forever. I could multiply the examples, but what is crucial here is to understand that *majorities, large numbers or, even more so, the support of secular authorities are absolutely meaningless in Christian theology and in the history of the Church* and that, with time, all the lapsed bishops who attended robber councils are always eventually denounced and the Orthodox truth always proclaimed once again. It is especially important to keep this in mind during times of persecution

or of brutal interference by secular authorities because even when they *appear* to have won, their victory is always short-lived.

I would add that the Russian Orthodox Church is not just “one of the many” local Orthodox Churches. Not only is the Russian Orthodox Church by far the biggest Orthodox Church out there, but Moscow used to be the so-called “Third Rome”, something which gives the Moscow Patriarchate a lot of prestige and, therefore, influence. In secular terms of prestige and “street cred” the fact that the Russians did not participate in the 1923 and 2016 congresses is much bigger a blow to its organizers than if, say, the Romanians had boycotted it. This might not be important to God or for truly pious Christians, but I assure you that this is absolutely crucial for the wannabe “Eastern Pope” of the Phanar...

Who is really behind this latest attack on the Church?

So let's begin by stating the obvious: for all his lofty titles (“His Most Divine All-Holiness the Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch“ no less!), the Patriarch of Constantinople (well, of the Phanar, really), is nothing but a puppet in the hands of the AngloZionist Empire. An ambitious and vain puppet for sure, but a puppet nonetheless. To imagine that the Uber-loser Poroshenko would convince him to pick a major fight with the Moscow Patriarchate is absolutely laughable and totally ridiculous. Some point out that the Patriarch of Constantinople is a Turkish civil servant. While technically true, this does not suggest that Erdogan is behind this move either: right now Erdogan badly needs Russia on so many levels that he gains nothing and risks losing a lot by alienating Moscow. No, the real initiator of this entire operation is the AngloZionist Empire and, of course, the Papacy (which has always tried to create an “*Orthodoxerein* Ukraine” from the “The Eastern Crusade” and “Northern Crusades” of Popes Innocent III and Gregory IX to the Nazi Ukraine of Bandera – see [here](https://thesaker.is/ukrainian-nationalism-its-roots-and-nature/) for details) (<https://thesaker.is/ukrainian-nationalism-its-roots-and-nature/>).

Why would the Empire push for such a move? Here we can find a mix of petty and larger geostrategic reasons. First, the petty ones: they range from the usual impotent knee-jerk reflex to do something, anything, to hurt Russia to pleasing of the Ukronazi emigrés in the USA and Canada. The geostrategic ones range from trying to save the highly unpopular Ukronazi regime in Kiev to breaking up the Orthodox world thereby weakening Russian soft-power and influence. This type of “logic” shows a fundamental misunderstanding of the Orthodox world today. Here is why:

The typical level of religious education of Orthodox Christians is probably well represented by the famous Bell Curve: some are truly completely ignorant, most know a little, and a few know a lot. As long as things were reasonably peaceful, all these Orthodox Christians could go about their daily lives and not worry too much about the big picture. This is also true of many Orthodox Churches and bishops. Most folks like beautiful rites (singing, golden cupolas, beautiful architecture and historical places) mixed in with a little good old superstition (place a candle before a business meeting or playing the lottery) – such is human nature and, alas, most Orthodox Christians are no different, even if their calling is to be “not of this world”. But now this apparently peaceful picture has been severely disrupted by the actions of the Patriarch of Constantinople whose actions are in such blatant and severe violation of all the basic canons and traditions of the Church that they literally force each Orthodox Christian, especially bishops, to break their silence and take a position: am I with Moscow or with Constantinople?

Oh sure, initially many (most?) Orthodox Christians, including many bishops, will either try to look away or limit themselves to vapid expressions of “regret” mixed in with calls for “unity”. A good example of that kind of wishy washy lukewarm language can already be found [here](https://oca.org/news/headline-news/metropolitan-tikhon-issues-archpastoral-letter-concerning-recent-developmen). (https://oca.org/news/headline-news/metropolitan-tikhon-issues-archpastoral-letter-concerning-recent-developmen) But this kind of Pilate-like washing of hands (“ain’t my business” in modern parlance) is unsustainable, and here is why: in Orthodox ecclesiology you cannot build “broken Eucharistic triangles”. If A is not in communion with B, then C cannot be in communion with A and B at the same time. It’s really an “either or” binary choice. At least in theory (in reality, such “broken triangles” have existed, most recently between the former [ROCA/ROCOR](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Church_Outside_Russia), (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Church_Outside_Russia) the Serbian Church and the Moscow Patriarchate, but they are unsustainable, as events of the 2000-2007 years confirmed for the ROCA/ROCOR). Still, no doubt that some (many?) will try to remain in communion with both the Moscow Patriarchate and the Constantinople Patriarchate, but this will become harder and harder with every passing month. In some specific cases, such a decision will be truly dramatic, I think of [the monasteries on the Holy Mountain](http://tass.com/society/1026092) in particular. (http://tass.com/society/1026092)

[Sidebar: on a more cynical level, I would note that the Patriarch of Constantinople has now opened a real Pandora’s box which now every separatist movement in an Orthodox country will be able to use to demand its

own “autocephaly” which will threaten the unity of most Orthodox Churches out there. If all it takes to become “autocephalous” is to trigger some kind of nationalist uprising, then just imagine how many “Churches” will demand the same autocephaly as the Ukronazis are today! The fact that [ethno-phyetism is a condemned heresy](#) will clearly stop none of them.

(<http://www.unz.com/tsaker/the-abomination-of-desolation-standing-in-the-holy-place/>) After all, if it is good enough for the “Ecumenical” Patriarch, it sure is good enough for any and all pseudo-Orthodox nationalists!]

What the AngloZionist Empire has done is to force each Orthodox Christian and each Orthodox Church to chose between siding with Moscow or Constantinople. This choice will have obvious spiritual consequences, which the Empire couldn't give a damn about, but it will also profound political and social consequences which, I believe, the Empire entirely missed.

The Moscow Patriarchate vs the Patriarchate of Constantinople – a sociological and political analysis

Let me be clear here that I am not going to compare and contrast the Moscow Patriarchate (MP) and the Patriarchate of Constantinople (PC) from a spiritual, theological or even ecclesiological point of view here. Instead, I will compare and contrast them from a purely sociological and political point of view. The differences here are truly profound.

| | Moscow Patriarchate | Patriarchate of Constantinople |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Actual size | Very big | Small |
| Financial means | Very big | Small |
| Dependence on the support of the Empire and its various entities | Limited | Total |
| Relations with the Vatican | Limited, mostly due to very strongly anti-Papist sentiments in the people | Mutual support and de-facto alliance |
| Majority member's outlook | Conservative | Modernist |
| Majority member's level of support | Strong | Lukewarm |

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Majority member's concern with Church rules/ canons/ traditions | Medium and selective | Low |
| Internal dissent | Practically eliminated (ROCA) | Strong (Holy Mountain, Old Calendarists) |

From the above table you can immediately see that the sole comparative ‘advantage’ of the PC is that it has the full support of the AngloZionist Empire and the Vatican. On all the other measures of power, the MP vastly “out-guns” the PC.

Now, inside the Ukronazi occupied Ukraine, that support of the Empire and the Vatican (via their Uniats) does indeed give a huge advantage to the PC and its Ukronazi pseudo-Orthodox “Churches”. And while Poroshenko has promised that no violence will be used against the MP parishes in the Ukraine, we all remember that he was the one who promised to stop the war against the Donbass, so why even pay attention to what he has to say.

US diplomats and analysts might be ignorant enough to believe Poroshenko’s promises, but if that is the case then they are failing to realize that Poroshenko has very little control over the [hardcore Nazi mobs like the one we saw last Sunday in Kiev](http://thesaker.is/no-no-no-there-are-absolutely-no-nazis-in-the-ukraine/). (http://thesaker.is/no-no-no-there-are-absolutely-no-nazis-in-the-ukraine/) The reality is very different: Poroshenko’s relationship to the hardcore Nazis in the Ukraine is roughly similar to the one the House of Saud has with the various al-Qaeda affiliates in Saudi Arabia: they try to both appease and control them, but they end up failing every time. The political agenda in the Ukraine is set by *bona fide* Nazis, just as it is set in the KSA by the various al-Qaeda types. Poroshenko and MBS are just impotent dwarfs trying to ride on the shoulders of much more powerful devils.

Sadly, and as always, the ones most at risk right now are the simple faithful who will resist any attempts by the Ukronazi death-squads to seize their churches and expel their priests. I don’t expect a civil war to ensue, not in the usual sense of the world, but I do expect a lot of atrocities similar to what took place during the 2014 Odessa massacre when the Ukronazis burned people alive (and shot those trying to escape). Once these massacres begin, it will be very, very hard for the Empire to whitewash them or blame it all on “Russian interference”. But most crucially, as the (admittedly controversial) Christian writer Tertullian noticed as far back as the 2nd century “*the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church*”. You can be sure that the massacre of

innocent Christians in the Ukraine will result in a strengthening of the Orthodox awareness, not only inside the Ukraine, but also in the rest of the world, especially among those who are currently “on the fence” so to speak, between the kind of conservative Orthodoxy proclaimed by the MP and the kind of lukewarm wishy washy “decaf” pseudo-Orthodoxy embodied by the Patriarchate of Constantinople. After all, it is one thing to change the Church Calendar or give hugs and kisses to Popes and quite another to bless Nazi death-squads to persecute Orthodox Christians.

To summarize I would say that by his actions, the Patriarch of Constantinople is now forcing the entire Orthodox world to make a choice between two very different kind of “Orthodoxies”. As for the Empire, it is committing a major mistake by creating a situation which will further polarize strongly, an already volatile political situation in the Ukraine.

There is, at least potentially, one more possible consequence from these developments which is almost never discussed: its impact inside the Moscow Patriarchate.

Possible impact of these developments inside the Moscow Patriarchate

Without going into details, I will just say that the Moscow Patriarchate is a very diverse entity in which rather different “currents” coexist. In Russian politics I often speak of Atlantic Integrationists and Eurasian Sovereignists. There is something vaguely similar inside the MP, but I would use different terms. One camp is what I would call the “pro-Western Ecumenists” and the other camp the “anti-Western Conservatives”. Ever since Putin came to power the pro-Western Ecumenists have been losing their influence, mostly due to the fact that the majority of the regular rank and file members of the MP are firmly behind the anti-Western Conservative movement (bishops, priests, theologians). The rabid hatred and fear of everything Russian by the West combined with the total support for anything anti-Russian (including Takfiris and Nazis) has had its impact here too, and very few people in Russia want the civilizational model of Conchita Wurst, John McCain or Pope Francis to influence the future of Russia. The word “ecumenism” has, like the word “democracy”, become a four letter word in Russia with a meaning roughly similar to “sellout” or “prostitution”. What is interesting is that many bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate who, in the past, were torn between the conservative pressure from their own flock and their own “ecumenical” and “democratic” inclinations (best embodied by the Patriarch of Constantinople) have now made a choice for the conservative

model (beginning by Patriarch Kirill himself who, in the past, used to be quite favorable to the so-called “ecumenical dialog of love” with the Latins).

Now that the MP and the PC have broken the ties which previously united them, they are both free to pursue their natural inclinations, so to speak. The PC can become some kind of “Eastern Rite Papacy” and bask in an unhindered love fest with the Empire and the Vatican while the MP will now have almost no incentive whatsoever to pay attention to future offers of *rapprochement* by the Empire or the Vatican (these two [always work hand in hand](http://thesaker.is/how-the-vatican-is-preparing-to-launch-a-religious-war-in-ukraine-with-the-help-of-the-constantinople-patriarchate-and-the-uniats/)). (<http://thesaker.is/how-the-vatican-is-preparing-to-launch-a-religious-war-in-ukraine-with-the-help-of-the-constantinople-patriarchate-and-the-uniats/>) For Russia, this is a very good development.

Make no mistake, what the Empire did in the Ukraine constitutes yet another profoundly evil and tragic blow against the long-suffering people of the Ukraine. In its ugliness and tragic consequences, it is quite comparable to the occupation of these lands by the Papacy via its Polish and Lithuanian agents. But God has the ability to turn even the worst horror into something which, in the end, will strengthen His Church.

Russia in general, and the Moscow Patriarchate specifically, are very much in a transition phase on many levels and we cannot overestimate the impact which the West’s hostility on all fronts, including spiritual ones, will have on the future consciousness of the Russian and Orthodox people. The 1990s were years of total confusion and ignorance, not only for Russia by the way, but the first decade of the new millennium has turned out to be a most painful, but also most needed, eye-opener for those who had naively trusted the notion that the West’s enemy was only Communism, not Russia as a civilizational model.

In their infinite ignorance and stupidity, the leaders of the Empire have always acted only in the immediate short term and they never bothered to think about the mid to long term effects of their actions. This is as true for Russia as it is for Iraq or the Balkans. When things eventually, and inevitably, go very wrong, they will be sincerely baffled and wonder how and why it all went wrong. In the end, as always, they will blame the “other guy”.

There is no doubt in my mind that the latest maneuver of the AngloZionist Empire in the Ukraine will yield some kind of feel-good and short term “victory” (“peremoga” in Ukrainian) which will be followed by a humiliating defeat (“zrada” in Ukrainian)

which will have profound consequences for many decades to come and which will deeply reshape the current Orthodox world. In theory, these kinds of operations are supposed to implement the ancient principle of “divide and rule”, but in the modern world what they really do is to further unite the Russian people against the Empire and, God willing, will unite the Orthodox people against pseudo-Orthodox bishops.

Conclusion:

In this analysis I have had to describe a lot of, shall we say, “less than inspiring” realities about the Orthodox Church and I don’t want to give the impression that the Church of Christ is as clueless and impotent as all those denominations, which, over the centuries have fallen away from the Church. Yes, our times are difficult and tragic, but the Church has not lost her “salt”. So what I want to do in lieu of a personal conclusion is to quote one of the most enlightened and distinguished theologians of our time, [Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Hierotheos_(Vlachos)_of_Nafpaktos), ([https://orthodoxwiki.org/Hierotheos_\(Vlachos\)_of_Nafpaktos](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Hierotheos_(Vlachos)_of_Nafpaktos)) who in his book “[The Mind of the Orthodox Church](https://www.amazon.com/Mind-Orthodox-Church-Hierotheos/dp/9607070399/)” (<https://www.amazon.com/Mind-Orthodox-Church-Hierotheos/dp/9607070399/>) (which I consider one of the best books available in English about the Orthodox Church and a “must read” for anybody interested in Orthodox ecclesiology) wrote the following words:

Saint Maximos the Confessor says that, while Christians are divided into categories according to age and race, nationalities, languages, places and ways of life, studies and characteristics, and are “distinct from one another and vastly different, all being born into the Church and reborn and recreated through it in the Spirit” nevertheless “it bestows equally on all the gift of one divine form and designation, to be Christ’s and to bear His Name. And Saint Basil the Great, referring to the unity of the Church says characteristically: “The Church of Christ is one, even though He is called upon from different places”. These passages, and especially the life of the Church, do away with every nationalistic tendency. It is not, of course, nations and homelands that are abolished, but nationalism, which is a heresy and a great danger to the Church of Christ.

Metropolitan Hierotheos is absolutely correct. Nationalism, which itself is a pure product of West European secularism, is one of the most dangerous threats facing the Church today. During the 20th century it has already cost the lives of millions of pious and faithful Christians (having said that, this in no way implies that the kind of suicidal multiculturalism advocated by the degenerate leaders of the AngloZionist

Empire today is any better!). And this is hardly a “Ukrainian” problem (the Moscow Patriarchate is also deeply infected by the deadly virus of nationalism). Nationalism and ethno-phyletism are hardly worse than such heresies as Iconoclasm or Monophysitism/Monothelitism were in the past and those were eventually defeated. Like all heresies, nationalism will never prevail against the “*Church of the living God*” which is the “*the pillar and ground of the truth*” (1 Tim 3:15) and while many may lapse, others never will.

In the meantime, the next couple of months will be absolutely crucial. Right now it appears to me that the majority of the Orthodox Churches will first try to remain neutral but will have to eventually side with the Moscow Patriarchate and against the actions of Patriarch Bartholomew. Ironically, the situation inside the USA will most likely be particularly chaotic as the various Orthodox jurisdictions in the USA have divided loyalties and are often split along conservative vs modernizing lines. The other place to keep a close eye on will be the monasteries on the Holy Mountain where I expect a major crisis and confrontation to erupt.

With the crisis in the Ukraine the heresy of nationalism has reached a new level of infamy and there will most certainly be a very strong reaction to it. The Empire clearly has no idea what kind of dynamic it has now set in motion.

The Saker

Obedience in Christianity: a reply to an important question

September 30, 2018



Question: As an Orthodox Christian in America we are taught to almost worship our Bishops, and they can do no wrong. We are to strictly obey them unless they ask us to break the law, or hurt someone. However, what happens when they err? What is one to do? As a struggling Orthodox Christian in America I would appreciate advice from other Orthodox Christians.

Iconodule

(this question was originally posted [here](#))

Dear Iconodule,

Your question is such a crucial and important one that I decided to take the space and time to answer it here, as a separate article, instead of the comment section. I hope that you don't mind. My hope is that this reply will also be of some interest to other Orthodox Christians.

So here is my reply:

For one thing, Christians only worship God, never any man or anything created. Even icons are only venerated, not worshiped! As for obedience, our obedience is

ONLY to God and to His Church. But as for any obedience to a cleric it is, of course, fully conditional upon the obedience of that cleric himself to God and His Church. More about that below.

Also, let's not conflate the office/rank (*cah* in Russian) and the man. Clergymen are just like everybody else, sinners who suffer from passions resulting for our fallen human nature: they can do wrong and they often do. In fact, no human is sinless and no human is infallible. The only source of infallibility is the Church because the (one and only true) Church is the Theandric Body of Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit. But individual clergymen, and even saints, are humans, just like the rest of us, and *errare humanum est*, right? If anything, they deserve our gratitude and admiration for having agreed to bear the heavy cross of being clerics in our End Times. They also deserve our compassion and support when they fail to live up, in their pastoral efforts (not their faith!), to the very high standards of their office/rank.

HOWEVER,

There is one thing in which we can make no compromise whatsoever and in which every single one of us is entitled to reprimand and even censor any of our clergymen: their Orthodoxy. This is the one thing in which ALL Orthodox Christians are absolutely equals: in the preservation of the purity of the Christian faith.

In the Orthodox Church there is no such thing as a “teaching Church” vs a “taught Church” – that is a Papist concept. Please read the [life of Saint Maximos the Confessor](https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/01/life-of-st-maximus-confessor.html) (<https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/01/life-of-st-maximus-confessor.html>) and then realize that while he was a monastic, he was not even a priest. Yet, he was willing to stand up and denounce all the Patriarchs of his time (while he was in jail he did not know for sure whether the Pope would also join the heretics or not, and his jailers lied to him about that!)

Also, check out the [15th canon of the First and Second Council](http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/ecum_canons.aspx): (http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/ecum_canons.aspx) (emphasis added)

“The rules laid down with reference to Presbyters and Bishops and Metropolitan are still more applicable to Patriarchs. So that in case any Presbyter or Bishop or Metropolitan dares to secede or apostatize from the communion of his own Patriarch, and fails to mention the latter’s name in accordance with custom duly fixed and ordained, in the divine Mystagogy, but, before a conciliar verdict has been pronounced and has passed judgement against him, creates a schism, the

*holy Synod has decreed that this person shall be held an alien to every priestly function if only he be convicted of having committed this transgression of the law. Accordingly, these rules have been sealed and ordained as respecting persons who under the pretext of charges against their own presidents stand aloof, and create a schism, and disrupt the union of the Church. **But as for those persons, on the other hand, who, on account of some heresy condemned by holy Synods, or Fathers, withdrawing themselves from communion with their president, who, that is to say, is preaching the heresy publicly, and teaching it bareheaded in church, such persons not only are not subject to any canonical penalty on account of their having walled themselves off from any and all communion with the one called a bishop before any conciliar or synodical verdict has been rendered, but, on the contrary, they shall be deemed worthy to enjoy the honor which befits them among Orthodox Christians. For they have defied, not bishops, but pseudo-bishops and pseudo-teachers; and they have not sundered the union of the Church with any schism, but, on the contrary, have been sedulous to rescue the Church from schisms and divisions.***”

Amazing words, no? And how far removed they are from the current “clergy worship” we see in so many modern Orthodox Churches!

[Sidebar: a personal recollection. My first spiritual father was an Archbishop of the ROCA whom I loved with all my heart. One day, I must have been 12 years old, I asked him “Vladyka, if you ever err from the truth of Orthodoxy, may I disobey you?” He looked me intensely and replied “no, Andrei, you may not, you must! That will be your duty”. I never forgot that and his words played a crucial role in my life during the 1999-2007 years...]

The sad truth is that what you (correctly) call a kind of “worship of clergy” is a typically Latin attitude which now has now infected large segments of the Orthodox world. I have seen that with my own eyes at the time of the lapse of the bishops of the ROCA who, while initially steadfastly denying that this was their intention, were planning a union with the Moscow Patriarchate. During these crucial years of lies and deception, not only did they insist that the faithful obey them, many of them even went as far as to say “shut up, pray and mind your business” (even to monastics!). The “business” in question, however, had immense ecclesiological implications and ecclesiology is one topic which NO Orthodox Christian ever can ignore.

Unfortunately, by then most ROCA laity (and even clergy!) had lost the correct Orthodox ecclesiological awareness.

But how do we know if we are dealing with true bishops or pseudo-bishops? Well, that question is the main reason why we cannot afford to just be a passive flock of obedient sheep and why it is our individual duty to educate ourselves in dogmatic and other theological issues!

The truth is that every single Orthodox Christian should be a “guardian of the faith”, not just clerics or bishops, and that even a young housewife has the right (and even the moral obligation!) to admonish any clergyman, even a Patriarch, *if* he strays away from the faith “*which the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers*”.

However, and this is no less important, the Orthodox Church never engaged in the “*solo scriptura*” nonsense and the Church is not some kind of “Eastern Rite” Protestant denomination, that is to say that the **criterion of truth** is not “whatever I happen to think about this after reading the Scripture” but the **consensus of the Fathers**: that upon which all the Church Fathers agreed upon and which is part of the corpus of patristic teachings of the Church. Thus, before accusing a bishop of apostasy, you really better make sure you know what you are talking about and that your case is rock solid (there are canonical punishments for making false accusations). For example, a bishop expressing a personal opinion to some friends or guests is not publicly teaching heresy from the *ambon* bareheaded. Likewise, a bishop who happens to have a bad temper and who is greedy and arrogant might be committing a personal sin, but he is not thereby lapsing from his faith.

These are complex and nuanced issues which require not only a specific degree of education (whether formal or not) but also a lot of wisdom, prayer and ascetic practice. Remember that in Orthodoxy a theologian is not somebody who has a PhD in “Divinity” (love that term!) but a person illuminated by personal experience and with a pure heart (“*for they shall see God*”). The Church is a mystical Body, not a scholastic community...

But with all these important caveats, yes, Orthodox Christians have never delegated their personal responsibility for the defense of the traditions “*which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle*” to any kind of “Holy Inquisition” or any “Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith”. Every time a heresy or schism threatened

the Church, even solitary desert monastics left their caves and walked to the cities to denounce it.

By the way, any bishop who tells you that you ought to strictly obey him “unless they ask us to break the law, or hurt someone” is teaching you an ecclesiological heresy and, if he does that from the *ambon*, you have the right and, I would argue, the duty, to first admonish him, they appeal to the council of bishops and, if they fail to act, to withdraw from communion from him and those who refuse to censor him. In fact, the 15th canon of the First and Second Council even allows you to temporary sever communion with that bishop until the council of bishops takes a decision on his actions (in practical terms, however, and with our 21st century telecommunication technologies, I would recommend that you simply discuss that with your confessor or call/email a bishop whose Orthodoxy you trust and ask him for advice).

An Orthodox Christian worships only God and only obeys those who, themselves, remain obedient to Him. There is no such thing as “Christian obedience” which is not obedience to God. Western clericalism is something completely foreign to the Orthodox mindset, lofty honorific titles notwithstanding.

Remember the words of the Gospel “*Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you*”. Each and every one of us is called to be “friend of God” (think what an amazing statement that is!) because God has made His Will known to us. Thus we freely chose to place ourselves in obedience to Him, but that implies two things: first, that we make the effort to study and understand His Will and, second, that we only obey Him, including through those whom He has appointed to look over us, but only as long as they themselves remain in obedience to Him!

[Sidebar: it always makes me smile when I hear Orthodox men reminding their wives that the Scripture says “*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing*” (which it indeed does, in Eph 5:22-24) but then they seem to forget that the very next few verses (25-28) also say “*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might*

present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself". I dare say that while the bar is set very high for women, it is set even much higher for men: loving like Christ loved the church is, quite literally, infinite and perfect love! How many husbands do live up to that ideal?]

How can the obedience of the wife be looked at without consideration for the duty of perfect love which placed upon husbands?! The exact same thing goes for any other Christian hierarchy, from the one children owe their parents to the one the priest owes to the bishop to, of course, the one the bishop owes to God and His Church. This is why I say that **all truly Christian obedience is to God and only to Him**]

Another important thing which I highly recommend to you is to immerse yourself in the following

- The writings of the Church Fathers (absolutely crucial!!!)
- The Lives of the Saints (including the liturgical canons associated with their feast days!)
- Books on the history of the Churches (except those written by modern historians and “theologians” which, with a few notable exceptions, are typically worthless since their authors are much more concerned with making a name for themselves in western academia rather than with conveying through their books the true Orthodox mindset or “spirit of the Fathers” (*phronema ton pateron*) (http://orthodoxinfo.com/phronema/ph_holytrad.aspx) or, for that matter, the “consensus of the Fathers” (http://orthodoxinfo.com/phronema/st_ch5.aspx) which expresses the “general conscience of the Church” (*he genike syneidesis tes ekklesias*). Stay away from those “brilliant” “theologians”!)

If you read immerse yourself into that spiritual world you will come to realize that there is really nothing new under the sun and that the kind of crises we see today happened in the past. If your read the Church Fathers, the Lives of the Saint and study Church history, you will see numerous examples of how Orthodox Christians have struggled with the issue of obedience and hierarchy and what the right, and wrong, have been. You will also see a long, very long, list of pseudo-bishops, of clerics who “lapsed” (a very important ecclesiological concept) because they were lured away from the Golgotha (think about what it really means to make the sign of the Cross!) by

worldly temptations and riches. But, eventually, the Church prevailed against the theomachs every time.

Today much of what he see under the label “Orthodoxy” is little more than some “eastern rite” version of both the Papacy and the Protestant world. But if you immerse yourself in the study of the Church you will discover a completely different spiritual universe, a different spiritual reality, in which there is no need to reinvent the wheel every day and in which all the questions you have today have been answered many centuries ago! Just the life of Saint Maximos the Confessor (to which I linked to above) contains an immense wealth of theological lessons on how to deal with heresy, schisms, obedience, authority and even vicious persecution by civil authorities.

It is not easy to find good sources on Christian ecclesiology online, especially in English, but here is what I found: (in no special order)

- Saint Cyprian of Carthage “[On the Unity of the Church](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf05.iv.v.i.html)”
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf05.iv.v.i.html>
- Alexei Khomiakov “[The Church is One](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/church_is_one_e.htm)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/church_is_one_e.htm
- Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky) “[Christianity or the Church](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/christianity_church_e.htm)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/christianity_church_e.htm
- Right Reverend Photios, Bishop of Triaditza, “[Orthodox Unity Today](http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/unity_today.aspx)”
http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/unity_today.aspx
- Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky “[On the Church](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/invisible_church_pomazansky.htm)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/invisible_church_pomazansky.htm
- St. Justin (Popovich) “[The Attributes of the Church](http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/attributes.aspx)”
<http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/attributes.aspx>
- Dr. Alexander Kalomiros “[Orthodox Ecclesiology](http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/kalomiros.aspx)”
<http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/kalomiros.aspx>

- Saint John Chrysostom “[The Character and Temptations of a Bishop](http://www.holytrinitymission.org/books/english/priesthood_john_crysostom.htm#_Toc6623361)”
http://www.holytrinitymission.org/books/english/priesthood_john_crysostom.htm#_Toc6623361
- Archpriest Georges Florovsky “[The Catholicity of the Church](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/catholicity_church_florovsky.htm)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/catholicity_church_florovsky.htm
- Archpriest Georges Florovsky “[The Limits of the Church](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/limits_church.htm)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/limits_church.htm
- Archpriest Georges Florovsky “[On Church and Tradition](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/church_tradition_florovsky.htm)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/church_tradition_florovsky.htm

The above is a mix of very different authors and texts, but between them, you have a good primer for the study of Christian ecclesiology (along with a few names of good modern theologians).

In conclusion I would remind you that unlike the poor Latins, we don't have to conflate the Church of Christ with any one individual. The very notion of “[Sedevacantism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sedevacantism)” is, thank God, both absurd and irrelevant to us. (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sedevacantism>) We can freely choose whom we recognize as a true Orthodox Bishop according to our conscience and that choice is entirely unaffected by political, geographical or administrative considerations. Likewise, the “argument of numbers” is equally irrelevant to us: we don't care, in the least, how many people recognize Church X or Patriarch Y as “canonical” or how many parishes any bishop or Church has. Again, the example of Saint Maximos the Confessor is the best illustration of that when he replied to his jailers (who told him that even the legates of Rome will partake of the Mysteries with the heretical Patriarch) “*The whole world may enter into communion with the Patriarch, but I will not. The Apostle Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit anathematizes even angels who preach a new Gospel, that is, introduce novel teaching*“. Contrast Saint Maximos' willingness to disregard the possibility that the whole world would recognize the heretical patriarch with the modern “bean count” of parishes or Church members as some kind of proof of legitimacy! Finally, we know from our eschatology that in the End Times almost everybody will lapse and bow to the Antichrist, don't we?! And yet, so many of us use the “argument of numbers” to “prove” the “canonicity” of this or that person or ecclesiastical entity. How sad and yet how telling...

It is paradoxical that in our age of “enlightenment”, “democracy” and “freedom” so many of our punitively most “liberal” and “tolerant” bishops would demand of us a blind and mindless obedience, and not to God, but to them personally. Truly these bishops are the “*stars from heaven which fell unto the earth*” described by Saint John the Theologian, Apostle and Evangelist in his book of Revelation. I can tell you from personal experience that your bishop is not the exception, he is the rule – at least in our modern world. This is why I think that the single most important question each Orthodox Christian should ask himself is this: “which bishop today has remained *truly* Orthodox?” We know from the Scripture that the Church is the “*the pillar and foundation of truth*” and that “*the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*”. This means that there will always be at least one true bishop somewhere until the Second Coming. But we were never told that there would be many true bishops left. Christ told us “*Fear not, little flock*” and promised that He would send us the “*the Spirit of truth*” who will “*guide you into all truth*” and that those who really seek the truth (“*do hunger and thirst after righteousness*”) will find it (“*shall be filled*”) and that this truth shall “*make us free*”. This is just about the furthest thing from any kind of blind, mindless obedience I can imagine.

Kind regards,

The Saker

The abomination of desolation standing in the holy place

September 28, 2018



Warning: *the following text was written specifically to help Christians make sense of the “hijacked vocabulary” used in the discussion of the current attempts by the Empire to take control of the Orthodox people of the Ukraine. For atheists/agnostics this discussion will offer just some irrelevant and boring mumbo-jumbo with no relevance to the lofty realms of enlightened modern positivism.*

Introduction

The latest move by the Anglo-Zionist Empire in the Ukraine is truly an exceptionally ugly and dangerous one: it appears that the Patriarch of Constantinople will soon grant its full independence to the so-called “*Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate*”. This move is openly directed against the current biggest ecclesiastical body in the Ukraine the “*Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate*” and it will almost certainly lead to bloodshed and massacres similar to what took place in Odessa on May 2nd 2014: the Ukronazis will use force (riot police or even Nazi death squads) to forcibly seize the churches, cathedrals, monasteries and other buildings and properties currently owned by the Moscow Patriarchate.

There are many articles written about this development, but almost all of them are written from a secular point of view, even when written by supposedly Christian or Orthodox authors. The paradoxical element here is that a lot of theological terms are used by authors who have only a very vague idea of what these terms really mean. I have no desire to enter into this conversation and use the pseudo-spiritual reference framework typically used by such commentators and what I propose to do today is much more modest: I want to explain the original, Christian, meaning of the terms which are (mis-)used on a daily basis.

The reader will then decide how to apply them, or not, to the current crisis.

I will begin by the very basics.

The basics

The term “Christian” can mean one of two things: first, it can designate any person or group calling itself Christian. When used in this sense, the word “Christian” includes not only the all main Christian denominations, but also Sun Myung Moon’s Unification Church, the Mormons or even the [17% of British Christians who do not believe in the resurrection of Christ](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-39153121). (https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-39153121) Basically, in this context the term has no objective meaning whatsoever and this is how the term is mostly used nowadays.

There is also another use of the word “Christian”. This second definition is based on two very ancient statements. The first by Saint Athanasius of Alexandria (4th century) and the second one by Saint Vincent of Lérins (5th century). The first one says that the Christian faith is the faith “*which the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers. On this was the Church founded; and if anyone departs from this, he neither is nor any longer ought to be called a Christian*“. The second one says that this faith **only** includes that “*which has been believed everywhere, always and by all*“. By these definitions, “Christianity” is an objective category not a “free for all”. The key words affirming this are “*if anyone departs from this, he neither is nor any longer ought to be called a Christian*“. These ancient definition preclude not only any form of dogmatic innovation, they also imply that words can be used either in a truly Christian sense or not. There is no middle-ground here. This belief, which was shared by all the Church Fathers and all the members of the ancient, original, Christian Church has tremendous implications, especially for what is called “ecclesiology”.

The term “ecclesiology” refers to the Christian theology concerning the Church. In other words, the teachings of Christianity about what is, or what is not, the Church (and what is, or is not, *within the confines* of the Church) is **an objective corpus of beliefs, of key tenets, of dogmas.**

What I will do next is to explain the meaning of a number of concepts when used in this second, original, context and contrast their original meaning with the basically secular and pseudo-Christian meaning which is so often attributed to them nowadays.

One more thing, for the sake of clarity: I will be writing the word church with a lower case “c” when dealing with a building (as in “the church of Saint Paul in the city’s downtown”) and with a capital “C” when dealing with an ecclesiastical jurisdiction/body (as in the “Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate”); *in this latter case the use of the word “Church” with a capital “C” will in no way imply any recognition of legitimacy.*

1. Canonical, canonicity and “recognized”

Most authors nowadays speak of a “canonical” Church as being a “recognized” Church. This is a circular definition, by the way: a Church is canonical because it is recognized and it is recognized because it is canonical. This begs the obvious question: recognized by whom?! The answer is also obvious: either recognized by the country’s civil/secular authorities or recognized by other “canonical” Churches.

From a truly Christian point of view, this is utterly absurd. Since when do civil/secular powers have the expertise or, for that matter, the authority to recognize or not recognize Church “A” as “canonical” and Church “B” as “non-canonical”?! And what does “canonical” mean anyway?

“Canonical” simply means “in conformity to the Church canons”. As for the word “canon” it is simply the Greek word for “ruler, measure”. Simply put, something is “canonical” when it is in conformity with the dogmas, rules, decrees, definitions and practices proclaimed and adopted by the Christian Church, primarily by means of decisions by the various recognized Church councils (I won’t go into the issue of what constitutes a recognized council since that will take too much time). You could say that something is canonical if it conforms to the rules of Saint Athanasius of Alexandria and Saint Vincent of Lérins quoted above. This, again, is an **objective**

category which cannot be twisted and turned into a free for all. So let's look at one such canons and see what it says. The 31st Apostolic Canon decrees that:

If any bishop makes use of the rulers of this world, and by their means obtains to be a bishop of a church, let him be deprived and suspended, and all that communicate with him.

This ruling of the apostles themselves has later been recognized and confirmed during an Ecumenical Council. The 3rd Canon of the 7th Ecumenical Council says:

“Every appointment of a bishop, or of a presbyter, or of a deacon made by (civil) rulers shall remain void in accordance with the Canon which says: “If any bishop comes into possession of a church by employing secular rulers, let him be deposed from office, and let him be excommunicated. And all those who communicate with him too.”

You see the problem now? How can anybody consider that civil/secular authorities are competent to “recognize” this or that Church as “canonical” when the canons of the Apostles and of a Ecumenical Council (the most authoritative Church Council) specifically state that if a bishop has obtains his “legitimacy” (office, rank, diocese or church properties) from civil/secular authorities he should be deposed, thus making him totally illegitimate? From a canonical point of view, the recognition of civil authorities is not only meaningless, it could, depending on the exact circumstances, constitute grounds for deposition!

The reality is that during much of the 20th century what we have seen is the civil/secular authorities of various countries supporting one Church against another for purely political purposes. This was especially prevalent in the Communist countries. Some bishops were considered “friendly” and others “enemies of the people”. The secular authorities then simply used brute force (usually in the form of riot police) to evict the latter and replace them with the former. The “friendly” bishops then took control of all of the churches, monasteries and other properties and declared themselves to be legitimate and canonical because they were recognized and because they were placed in control of a lot of very visible and historical real estate.

Needless to say, that kind of dependence on the goodwill and support of civil/secular authorities placed the “friendly” Churches into a complete subordination to the state, exactly what the civil/secular authorities wanted in the first place. The fact

that, unlike in most similar cases before the 20th century, the civil authorities in the 20th century were not only secular, but openly and militantly atheistic created a qualitatively new phenomenon: the subordination of bishops and Churches to the will of anti-religious secular regimes. Nowadays, of course, most governments in nominally Orthodox countries do not declare themselves as militant atheists, but the subordinate relationship of the official “state Churches” to the secular authorities has remained unchanged (even if their official rhetoric has been adapted to the new realities).

The bottom line is this: all this talk about “canonical” and “recognized” Churches is a self-serving canard used by those Churches who have obtained their official status by completely uncanonical means. In the overwhelming number of cases, when individuals or organizations use the term “canonical” they never mean “in conformity to the Church canons” simply because they are both ignorant and indifferent to what the Christian teachings really says about these matters.

2. Bishops, Patriarchs and wannabe “Eastern Popes”

Who is the biggest Ortho-boss, the bishop, or maybe the Archbishop, or the Metropolitan, or the Patriarch? It must be the “Ecumenical” Patriarch, right? Since he is “Ecumenical” he must be like an “Orthodox Pope”. Check out his official title: “*His Most Divine All-Holiness the Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch*“. God is, by definition, (only) “divine”. The Third Person of the Trinity is (just) the “Holy” Spirit. But the Patriarch of Constantinople is his “most divine and all-holy”! Wow – he surely must really be some kind of super Ortho-Pope!

Wrong.

There are only four main “ranks” in the Church: faithful, deacon, presbyter and bishop. All the rest are just honorific and/or administrative titles including reader, subdeacon, chanter, acolyte, protodeacon, archdeacon, protopresbyter, archpriest, archimandrite, mitred archpriest, protosyngellos, archbishop, metropolitan and patriarch. The rank of emperor, by the way, was associated with the rank of subdeacon and the emperor would receive the Mysteries (aka “sacraments”, the Eucharist) to the side of the altar with the subdeacons. None of these titles indicate any qualitative difference or mystical superiority.

The Church, while essentially mystical (thus referred to as the “theandric Body of Christ”) also has an administrative/organizational aspect which must exist within the

social and political environment of the society in which it operates. For example, while in mystical terms all bishops are equal, it was obvious from the beginning that being the bishop of the imperial city (be it Rome or Constantinople) was a far more important office than being the bishop of some remote and scarcely populated diocese. Furthermore, while all important decisions were made in councils (local or ecumenical) day to day decisions could be made by bishops specially invested with that authority (sometimes assisted by a few more bishops). But except for honorific and administrative reasons, all bishops are fundamentally equals, invested with the same *charisma* (gift) and authority. The Latin expression *primus inter pares*, or “first among equals”, expresses this reality.

This also fully applies to the “Most Divine All-Holiness the Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch” who had a honorific primacy simply because he was the ruling bishop of the capital of the Empire, just as the ruling bishop of Rome (the “Pope” in Latin terminology) had before him. I won’t go into the history of how the (tiny) Patriarchate of Constantinople used its former position to claim some kind of universal jurisdiction, this would take too much time, but I will simply note that two events which occurred on the 15th century have irrevocably made void any and all claims of primacy (even of honor) by the Patriarch of Constantinople: the False Union of Florence in 1439 AD and the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453 AD.

[Sidebar: the Russian Orthodox Church, by the way, could lay claim of being the “Third Rome” as successor to the First and Second Rome since the First Rome fell to the Barbarians in 476 and fell into apostasy in 1054 while the Second Rome fell into apostasy in 1439 and to the Ottomans in 1453. I won’t go into the merits of this argument, but I will just point out that it absolutely infuriates the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The fact that the Russian Orthodox Church is by far the biggest of all and the fact that Moscow and Saint Petersburg were the capitals of the last Orthodox empire only further serves to create tensions, and even outright hostility, between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Moscow Patriarchate. This is all very relevant in the case of the current political struggle over the Ukraine and the role of the Patriarch of Constantinople in it].

For all these historical and political arguments, the reality is that the Christian Church has always been **conciliar** in nature: that is to say that councils (local or

major ones) were both the mode and the sole authority by which important decisions could be taken, never any single individual. The example of the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem (in about 50 AD) was the first one to set such an example and it has always been followed by those faithful to the original Christian ecclesiology ever since.

3. The “right” for each country or nation to have its own Church

This is one of the most outlandish and yet also most frequent assertions made by almost every commentator out there: that there is some kind of “right” for each nation or country to have its own, independent, Church. Nothing could be further from the truth!

The reality is that Christianity (like Islam, by the way) absolutely rejects any categories based on ethnicity, race, tribe or anything similar. Here are just a few quotes from the New Testament proving this:

- *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28)*
- *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free and have been all made to drink into one Spirit (Gal 5:6)*
- *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God (1 Cor 7:19)*
- *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit (1 Cor; 12 :13)*
- *But the clearest and most definitive statement on this issue is this one:*

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all (Col 3:9-11).

So national/racial/ethnic/tribal categories are lies (contrast that with the racist interpretation of the Scripture by rabbinical phariseism aka modern “Orthodox Judaism”!), becoming a Christian renews your knowledge (that is make you adopt new

categories) and in Christ all are one (no more national/racial/ethnic/tribal for true Christians).

This teaching have always remained at the core of the true Christian dogmatic anthropology (i.e. teachings about the nature of man). In fact, what is nowadays called “phyletism” or “ethno-phyletism” (nationalism or tribalism) has been condemned as a heresy by a pan-Orthodox council as late as in 1872 (this council was held in Constantinople, of all places, what sad irony!) For those interested in the historical context for this council, you can download a PDF about it here: <http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/The-Synod-of-Constantinople-1872-The-Oecumenical-Synods-of-the-Orthodox-Church-Fr-James-Thornton.pdf>.

[Sidebar: It is ironical – and sad – that so many of those who today engage in “hunting the Jew” by means of putting silly parentheses around (((names))) and who call themselves Orthodox Christians completely fail to realize two things: first, they are using categories which the Church has denounced as heresies and, second, they are using the exact same categories as many of the (Orthodox) Jews they are denouncing. Frankly, this is rather pathetic and only goes to show the fantastically low level of spiritual education of those who fancy themselves as “defenders of the Christian faith” and who, in reality, have not even the vaguest basic notions about the faith they pretend to defend]

The truth is that modern national/racial/ethnic/tribal categories are just re-hated pagan categories and that those who use them today, including priests and bishops, are simply catering to the pagan, post-Christian *Zeitgeist* for petty political reasons. Furthermore, it is also true that since the fall of the last Orthodox Empire in 1917, the Orthodox Church has been undergoing an immense crisis brought along primarily by the infiltration of Greek Orthodox Churches by Freemasons (see [here](http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/ea_calendar.aspx) (http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/ea_calendar.aspx) for some background information) and the infiltration of the Russian Orthodox Church by agents of the Bolshevik regime in Russia (see [here](http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/cat_tal.aspx) (http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/cat_tal.aspx) and [here](http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/cat_intro.aspx) (http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/cat_intro.aspx) for some background information).

The combined effects of these three phenomena (1917 Revolution, Masonic and Bolshevik infiltration) has resulted in a deep crisis from which most Orthodox Churches have yet to recover and which often makes them easy pawns in political

battles (I discussed this issue in some detail in my article “[Why Orthodox Churches Are Still Used as Pawns in Political Games](https://www.unz.com/tsaker/why-orthodox-churches-are-still-used-as-pawns-in-political-games/)”) (<https://www.unz.com/tsaker/why-orthodox-churches-are-still-used-as-pawns-in-political-games/>)

As for rank and file Orthodox Christians, they are sometimes induced to come to the wrong conclusions about this because they believe (correctly) that, unlike the Latin Papacy, the Orthodox Church does not have one single super-boss and one single administration. They also believe (correctly) that, unlike the Latin Papacy of the past, the Orthodox Church did not have a single “official” language of worship and that, in fact, Orthodox ritual practice is rather diverse and often includes local cultural influences. These correct beliefs, however, bring them to the entirely false conclusion that each Orthodox nation has some kind of “right” to have its own independent (“autocephalous”) Orthodox Church.

The fact that much of the clergy of the “official” and “recognized” (that is “state approved” *vide supra*) Orthodox Churches is more than happy to comfort them in these beliefs does not help.

As for the secular leaders of the state, they are more than happy to have an Orthodox Church which is both 1) totally compliant and 2) nationalistic.

What is lost in all this madness is the Orthodox truth, the worldview of the true, original, Christianity, and the “spirit of the Fathers” (or *phronema* in Greek) which best expresses it (<http://orthodoxinfo.com/phronema/>). It is also no wonder that the most corrupt Orthodox hierarchs, like the Patriarch of Constantinople, are more than happy to pretend that Orthodox ecclesiology does somehow grant them the authority of some kind of “Eastern Pope”.

This is truly the “*abomination of desolation standing in the holy place*” (Matt 24:15 & Daniel 9:27)!

Those Orthodox Christians who nowadays succumb to the heresy of ethno-phyletism would do well to remember that besides the, shall we say, “geographical” meaning of the words of Christ (in reference to Jerusalem, of course, but also Rome, Constantinople, Moscow, Kiev and many other cities), there is also a second, spiritual meaning well explained by Saint Maximos the Confessor:

“From the passions embedded in the soul the demons take their starting base to stir up passionate thought in us. Then, by making war on the mind through them

they force it to go along and consent to sin. When it is overcome they lead it on to a sin of thought, and when this is accomplished they finally bring it as a prisoner to the deed. After this, at length, the demons who have devastated the soul through thoughts withdraw with them. In the mind there remains only the idol of sin and which the Lord says, "When you see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, let him who reads understand." Man's mind is a holy place and a temple of God in which the demons have laid waste the soul through passionate thoughts and set up the idol of sin. That these things have already happened in history no one who has read Josephus can, I think, doubt, though some say that these things will also happen when the Antichrist comes."(2nd Century on Love, #31).

Here we have arguably one of the greatest Christian theologians and philosophers of all times reminding us that the "abomination of desolation" will also happen in the minds of those who, suaded by demons and passions, stray away from that "*which has been believed everywhere, always and by all*" and, instead, let their minds and souls be polluted by the post-Christian nonsense of modern nationalisms. Nationalism, of course, is not only an modern idol, but it is also a rather crude form of self-worship, yet another truly satanic practice!

Conclusion: what this is all about and we can do about it

The first sad reality is that none of this is about Christianity, Orthodoxy, ecclesiology or anything else remotely connected to any notion of truth at all.

This is about buildings, real-estate, political power, money, influence, indoctrination and all the other key "values" of our times.

The second sad reality is that innocent and well-intentioned people will suffer and even die as a direct consequence of the immoral actions of a few power-greedy individuals.

The truth is that a religion-fulled civil war appears to have already been set in motion and that there is nothing we, simple rank and file Christians, can do about it, at least not in secular terms. In spiritual terms, we can do two things: we can, of course, pray and we can refuse to become part of a debate in which every single concept dear to us is misused, distorted and perverted. For that, we need to understand that the abomination which is taking place before our eyes did not just pop-up into existence *ex nihilo* and that there are profound spiritual roots to the

almost universal adoption of non-Christian categories by most, albeit not all, Christians. Christ Himself reminded us that *“If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you”* (John 15:9). We also know that the wisdom of this world is *“foolishness with God”* (1 Cor 3:19) and that it comes *“not come from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic”* (James 3:15). Then how can we then still operate by using worldly categories or worldly interpretations of patristic concepts?

What we can, and must, do is follow Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s famous appeal and [“live not by lies”](http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/articles/SolzhenitsynLies.php) (<http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/articles/SolzhenitsynLies.php>) even if most of our contemporaries, including many Christians (even clerics!) have given up on the very notion of “truth”. In Solzhenitsyn’s words

“So in our timidity, let each of us make a choice: whether consciously, to remain a servant of falsehood — of course, it is not out of inclination, but to feed one’s family, that one raises his children in the spirit of lies — or to shrug off the lies and become an honest person worthy of respect both by one’s children and contemporaries”.

After all, if we are truly Christians, then we can remember Christ’s promise that *“blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled”* (Matt 5:6) and, hopefully, this will give us courage to *“stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle”* (2 Thess 2:15).

Non-political interlude: reply to two posts (religions haters please skip this one!!)

May 17, 2014

Today is a beautiful day in Florida. Yesterday we “survived” not one, but two tornadoes (they mostly hit a national wildlife refuge south of us, there never was any real danger, but this sounds better) and today we get one of those perfect Florida days: blue skies with a few white clouds, beautiful warm sunshine (26C/79F), a cool breeze from the northeast and which brings in the always refreshing smell of the Atlantic ocean (were my lucky son spend six hours surfing the waves this morning). I know that I have to work on my promised report on world opinion and media coverage of the Ukrainian crisis, but I want to “seize the day” and go for some nature photography this afternoon (shall I post some pics of sunny Florida here?). The report will have to wait a little. However, I got two questions recently which I find worth answering in a separate post.
[WARNING: these two questions deal with religion so those of you who hate religion – please just ignore this post.]

Here are the two issues I want to discuss today: James wants to know what the Church is while Mohamed wrote in a comment that the Scripture was corrupted. I will take them one by one (though there is a link between the two)

@James: What is the Church?

To reply to this question adequately one could write a PhD thesis. I will try to make a much shorter reply and point you to a few texts, fair enough?

Since you are a former Latin Christian let me begin by saying what the Church is not. It is not an organization nor a formal institution. You probably remember that in the Symbol of Faith (aka the Credo) it says “In one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church”. Most people do not seem to be aware that the words at the very beginning “I believe in” also apply to the section “In one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church”. In other words, not only do Orthodox Christians believe **in one God**, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and of all things visible and invisible (...) **in one Lord Jesus Christ**, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of light; true God of true God; begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made” (...) **in the Holy Spirit**, the

Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father” but also “**In one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church**“. *The Church itself requires and act of faith similar to the confession of the belief in God.* Orthodox Christians literally “believe in the Church” and this is why the Church is most definitely not an organization.

In theological language the Church is called the *Theandric* Body of Christ. Theandric derives from *Theanthropos* or “Godman” the central dogma of all Christianity. In other words, the Church is literally the Body of Christ no less than the Eucharist. This is also why the only valid Mysteries (called “Sacraments” in western theology) can only be found inside that Church. Just like the Body of Christ, the Church cannot break into parts, have sub-groups, contradict itself, etc. This is why the Symbol of Faith speaks of ONE Church, no more divisible than God Himself. Again, to accept that requires an act of faith.

The Church is called “Holy” because it is the Body of Christ and that it is filled with the Holy Spirit. This is why at the First Apostolic Council in Jerusalem (50 AD) those present wrote “For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us.” (Acts 15: 28). However, its individual members – laity and clergy – are not necessarily holy at all. The Church is also a hospital for sinners and not an elite club of perfect holy people.

The Church is called “Catholic” because of the Greek word καθολικός which means “universal”, especially in the following two meanings: a) which includes and is not limited to one region, country, continent or part of the world and b) acts in a way which includes everybody. The first one is obvious, but the second one is not. In this sense, “Catholic” means “Counciliar” in reference to a “council of all” or, in Greek, a “Ecumenical” (including the whole world) council. The Russian term Соборный/соборность is very accurate here as it clearly points to a council (“sobor” in Russian). So being “Catholic/Counciliar” means that there is no “teaching Church” versus a “taught Church”, no one instance or clerical rank which is the source of “authority” (to use a Latin concept) or unity. It is the whole Body of the Church, down to the last layperson, which acting as one has the “authority” of the Church. Not even a council of, say, 99% of all the Orthodox Bishops – nevermind one bishop or one Patriarch – on the planet can claim to speak for the Church if the rest of the “Body” does not agree with it. There have been plenty of instances in history where the vast majority of bishops which formally appeared to have remained Orthodox had, in fact, lapsed from the Church. These are the so-called “robber councils” which, at that time, looked legit and had all the external signs of legitimacy, but which the Body of the

Church – the people, really – ended up denouncing and condemning later. Again, there is no external legitimacy, no authority from which legitimacy can be derived, no person or group of people who can deliver some “certificate of authenticity” to this or that local Church or bishop. So how do we know which is the one true Church as opposed to those who only appear to be so externally. Here are the criteria of truth:

1) Apostolic succession. Simple enough, does not need to be explained.

2) True confession of faith. The local Church has to confess the exact same faith which, in the words of Saint Athanasios “the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers. On this was the Church founded; and if anyone departs from this, he neither is nor any longer ought to be called a Christian“. It has to be what I call “backward compatible” meaning absolutely no innovation. In the words of Saint Vincent of Lerins, it has to be exactly and fully the same as that ““which has been believed everywhere, always and by all“. If they did not all believe and confess X in, say, the 5th century or the 8th century, then it is not Orthodox. Simple.

3) Unity of the Eucharist: simply put – if you are not in Eucharistic communion with the rest of the Body of Christ, you are not part of the Church.

I would note here that the unity of faith is a prerequisite for the Eucharistic communion: if you do not have the same beliefs as I do, we cannot share the same Eucharist. Nowadays some got it exactly backward. They say “let us commune from the same cup, and then iron out our secondary differences later“. This is modern nonsense. The Church has never taught that.

In the world the visible part of the Church is, for cultural and practical reasons, organized along several independent religious organizations: local Churches, independent (“autocephalous”) Patriarchates which can be Russian, Greek, Paraguayan or Japanese. They pray in their own language, organize themselves in any way they want, have their own customs and traditions. Just like there were 12 and 70 apostles there can be plenty local and autonomous Churches as long as they maintain the unity of faith and communion. In fact, if the One Church did not allow that it would not be truly “Catholic” either. And just like the Apostles did not have some “Big Boss” over them, the Church has no Head other than Christ Himself. Sure, for administrative and pastoral issues each Church has a senior bishop (put in charge by a council of local bishops) but even that local boss has no more authority in matters of

faith, of confession, that any layperson. There have been plenty instances in the history of the Church when Patriarchs and entire councils strayed from the truth, and they were often reprov'd and even condemn'd by simply lay people. Speaking of which, there are only 4 clerical ranks in the Church: layperson (yes, that is a rank, a layperson can, in case of emergency, baptize in the name of the entire Church), deacon, priest and bishop. All the other fancy categories are only administrative or honorary. So folks with roaring titles like "His Beatitude the Archbishop of X" is no more than a simple bishop. A Protospesbyter is just a priest and an Archdeacon is just a deacon. Clergymen, by the way, are formally addressed with honorary titles "Most Reverend", "Your Grace", etc. but that really applies to the clerical rank, not the person carrying that rank. Same for kissing the hand of a priest – its not because he is so worthy, but because of the high rank ([charisma](#)) bestowed on him.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charisma#Divinely_conferred_charisma) He himself might be a dumb jerk (many are) or even a lying hypocritical ignoramus with a bad temper. Remember, the Church is a hospital for sinners, not a club of holy men. There is only one thing that really matters: the confession of faith of this clergyman needs to be 100% Orthodox and his personal sins must not be serious enough to ban him from serving and/or himself receiving the Eucharist (so no pedophilia, no sexual immorality, no killing, no apostasy, etc.).

Okay, I have to stop here even though we barely scratched the surface. Let me give you a few good readings I recommend:

Online texts on ecclesiology (what is the Church?):

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/christchurchilarion.htm>

http://www.myriobiblos.gr/texts/english/komiakov_essay.htm

http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/gen_church.aspx

(any text on that page)

General books on Orthodox Christianity:

<http://www.amazon.com/The-Faith-Understanding-Orthodox-Christianity/dp/0964914115/> <http://www.amazon.com/The-Orthodox-Church-New-Edition/dp/0140146563/>

<http://www.amazon.com/Truth-Catholic-Should-Orthodox-Catechism/dp/>

[0964914182/ http://www.amazon.com/Orthodox-Dogmatic-Theology-Concise-Exposition/dp/0938635697](http://www.amazon.com/Orthodox-Dogmatic-Theology-Concise-Exposition/dp/0938635697)

<http://www.amazon.com/Theosis-True-Purpose-Human-Life/dp/B001UR1SI0/>

I hope that this was useful. If not, I am sorry.

@Mohamed: was the Scripture corrupted?

Yes and no. Yes it was, but never successfully. Let me explain why.

First, if you accept that God did communicate with mankind by means of prophecy and that the prophets did put down the prophecies which they received, you would wonder why then God would let men distort or otherwise corrupt the message He sent us. Of course, all man can err, we are all sinful, and either by mistake or deliberately man have corrupted the Scripture, no question here, the pertinent question is rather could these men have gotten away with that?

In the Third book of Esdras we have an interesting episode. Esdras tells God that the Scripture has been burned and asks "If then I have found favor before thee, send the Holy Spirit into me, and I will write everything that has happened in the world from the beginning, the things which were written in thy law, that men may be able to find the path, and that those who wish to live in the last days may live." To which God replies "Go and gather the people, and tell them not to seek you for forty days. But prepare for yourself many writing tablets, and take with you Sarea, Dabria, Selemia, Ethanus, and As'iel—these five, because they are trained to write rapidly; and you shall come here, and I will light in your heart the lamp of understanding, which shall not be put out until what you are about to write is finished". And, sure enough, Esdras tells us "So I took the five men, as he commanded me, and we proceeded to the field, and remained there. And on the next day, behold, a voice called me, saying, "Ezra, open your mouth and drink what I give you to drink." Then I opened my mouth, and behold, a full cup was offered to me; it was full of something like water, but its color was like fire. And I took it and drank; and when I had drunk it, my heart poured forth understanding, and wisdom increased in my breast, for my spirit retained its memory; and my mouth was opened, and was no longer closed. And the Most High gave understanding to the five men, and by turns they wrote what was dictated, in characters which they did not know. They sat forty days, and wrote during the daytime, and ate their bread at night. As for me, I spoke in the daytime and was not silent at night. So during the forty days ninety-four books

were written. And when the forty days were ended, the Most High spoke to me, saying, "Make public the twenty-four books that you wrote first and let the worthy and the unworthy read them; but keep the seventy that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among your people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge." And I did so.

Sorry for the long quote, but I want to illustrate a point: when needed God can command his faithful to restore even the full Scripture provided a) that they are worthy to receive the guidance of the Holy Spirit and b) that they receive the "drink like fire" which God gives them (note that this book was written long before the times of Christ!). What is certain is that the notion that God would grant a revelation through His prophets and then allow that revelation to remain corrupted for centuries is rather ludicrous.

There was, indeed, one grievous attempt at falsifying the Scripture. It occurred after the fall of Jerusalem in 70AD. At that time the Jewish people were separated into 2 sects: those who believed that Christ was the Messiah and those who did not. The former become known as Christians, while the latter – mostly Pharisees – created their own group which developed a new spirituality which switched focus from the Old Testament to the Talmud, from the Temple to assemblies (synagogues), from priests to rabbis and from the original Scripture to a new "corrected" text. This texts had the official imprimatur of the rabbis who declared that it has been corrected by their sages, the scribes and scholars. Needless to say, what they really did is cut out or alter those parts of the Scripture which were inconvenient to them. At the time there was a great deal of hostility between the two groups and disputations centered around the Scripture, of course. The issue at hand was simple: did the prophesies about the Messiah in the scripture match what actually happened in the life of Christ or not? Could the followers of Christ prove their case by using the Scripture? Well, the "guardians of the tradition", or "[Masorettes](#)" as they became known, "corrected" the Scripture as much as possible to produce a forgery known today as the "[Masoretic text](#)" (abbreviated MT).

Christians immediately saw through that and denounced the text as a fake. One of the earliest documents we have showing that Christians at the time were fully aware that the Jews produced a forgery is the "[Dialog with Trypho](#)" in which [Saint Justin](#)

[Martyr](#) (2nd century) explicitly makes that accusation. The latter Fathers have also confirmed that.

You might wonder which text is the original and what happened to it. We only have parts of the original Hebrew “Old Testament” (which is, of course, not what they called it). Following the conquests of Alexander the Great much of what is today the Middle-East was “Hellenized” and the language of the elites and the international language of the time was Greek. About two centuries before the birth of Christ, at the request of the local (Greek) ruler, [Ptolemy II Philadelphius](#), a translation into Greek of the Hebrew text was made for the famous [Library of Alexandria](#) by 70 translators from the 12 tribes of Israel. This text is called the [Septuagint](#) (abbreviated LXX) in memory of these 70 translators. This is the only text ever considered authoritative by the Church. Following the Latin schism, the LXX was almost forgotten in western Europe where the Latin Church used a translation made by Saint Jerome called the [Vulgate](#). Because the Latin believed that only the “learned” clergy should read the Scripture and then teach and explain it to the “simple” folks, this text was not very widely circulated. In contrast, Luther wanted each Christian to have access to the Scripture. Luther, who was opposed to the Latin clericalism and who suspected that the Latins might have corrupted the text, decided to base his teaching on what he apparently sincerely believed was the “original” Hebrew text, the Masoretic forgery. As a result, the vast majority of Bibles available in the Western World are based on a text deliberately forged by Christ-hating rabbis, including the (otherwise beautifully written) King James Version. More recently, newer “corrected” versions of the MT have been made, but there is still only one, rather bad, translation of the LXX in English, the so-called “Brenton translation” (I hear that a new one is being worked on). But until very recently the West was simply too proud and too ignorant of Patristic thought to remember that only the LXX was the true text of the Old Testament.

I am going into all these details to illustrate a point: yes, Holy Writ can, and has been, corrupted both deliberately (Masoretes) or by ignorance (western Bibles). But God never allows the original true text to simply vanish.

I would also note that what the rabbis attempted is first and foremost a substitution: LXX by MT. They never claimed that the MT was the LXX. In fact, some Jewish holidays (such as [Hanukkah](#)) have no scriptural basis in the MT but only in the LXX (in the book of Maccabees in this case). Unlike the West, the Jews never forgot about

the LXX – they simply did not want to grant it authoritative status, for quite obvious reasons.

There are some sources which claim that an attempt to corrupt the LXX was also made by Jews, but I have seen no good evidence of that. For one thing, the LXX was simply too widely circulated (not as one text, but as a collection of books) to suddenly substitute another text. Really, the creation of the MT was for “internal consumption” and to beat back Christian polemicists.

So here is my main point: there is zero historical evidence to attest to the corruption of the original Holy Scripture. The only known case is the one I outlined above. We also know from the Scripture itself that God would never deprive his faithful from His Word, the example of Esdras (aka Ezra) above also shows that. Furthermore, simple logic suggests to us that it is impossible to corrupt a text which is both 1) widely circulated and 2) very closely analyzed and held for sacred.

Let me conclude here by saying that I personally believe that the Prophet Muhammad did hear about the Masoretic forgery and that this inspired him to look at the Christian Scripture with a strong suspicion that the text had been forged. Obviously, like Luther, he was not aware of the LXX. It is also possible that Muhammad might have had another reason to declare that the Christian scripture was corrupted: the so-called Old Testament has absolutely no prophecy speaking of any figure like Muhammad, this is why some Muslim scholars have had to declare that the “Comforter” mentioned by Christ to His disciples was a reference to Muhammad and not to the Holy Spirit, an interpretation which even a superficial reading of the New Testament immediately invalidates and which not a single Church Father or theologian between the first and seventh century endorsed.

Whatever may be the case, the Muslim theory that the Scripture has been successfully corrupted is both illogical and a-historical. One can, of course, chose to believe it, especially if one accepts that everything, including the historical record, has been forged, corrupted or lost, but at least to me faith and common sense should not contradict each other.

I think that it is undeniable that Christianity grew out of the religion of the Jewish people before the birth of Christ. Christ Himself constantly makes references to the books the Church has united into one volume called the “Old Testament”. If the topic is of interest to you, see all the texts on [this](#) page, especially [this](#) one and [this](#) one. In

contrast, Islam has no other scriptural basis than itself or, rather, the book it produced: the Quran

In conclusion I want to say that a closer look at history shows that the notion of “Judeo-Christian” is simply at least as nonsensical as speaking of a White-Black or a Dry-Wet. As for the so-called “Abrahamic religions” they truly have nothing in common. Modern Judaism is really nothing else but an “anti-Christianity” while Islam is a faith which appeared ex-nihilo and has no basis in either Jewish or Christian scripture or oral tradition.

I hope that I have not offended anybody here, especially not my Muslim friends and readers, but I felt that it was important to lay out here the original Christian understanding of these issues. As any other Orthodox Christian I strongly feel that it is my personal obligation to preserve that which has been passed on to me (the “corporate memory and awareness” of the Church, if you want) and to share it with others if/when it is appropriate. As (hopefully) intelligent and considerate people, we can “agree to disagree”, but to do that, you need to be made aware of the nature of what we might disagree on, right? By the way, I would welcome any offer to present a Muslim view of this – or any other – topic here and if somebody submits it (in the comment section for example) I will be glad to post it.

That’s it for today. I will return to worldly topics tomorrow.

I wish you all an excellent week-end, kind regards,

The Saker

Off-topic but apparently needed: Judaism and Christianity – back to basics

December 01, 2014

I have received a lot of outraged comments for my statement that Orthodox Judaism is at its core just a type of “anti-Christianity”. My critiques informed me of the fact that since Judaism was older than Christianity, it could hardly have been an anti-Christianity. Here are some samples of these comments:

Well, the first cannot possibly be true as Judaism existed well over thousand years prior, and ever since was an introverted worldview. (If you don't know much about it, no need to put such sort of labels. Everybody has a right to preach his own religion, not just the Orthodox Christians).

Surely you're aware that Judaism is MUCH older than Christianity, Saker? However some of them may feel towards the goyim, I think there's a good bit more to their religion than mere anti-Christian animosity.

WTF!?! and with that the fools and naive can point and chant “anti-semite” – and could you blame them? Well yes you could, but still. That one sentence pollutes any nuance, any thoughtful analysis, any factual argument saker makes. Shame saker is turning out to be a religious zealot – or at least an anti-jewish one.

Sigh...

As is so often the case, modern propaganda works by a mix of ignorance and learned assumptions. You could say that this is a case of “unknown unknowns” to paraphrase Rumsfeld. This is case, all the self-righteous outrage above is based on a very simple fallacy: the assumption that what we call “Judaism” today is the religion of the Jews before, or until, the times of Christ. This assumption is completely wrong.

What we call “Judaism” today is basically the continuation of one of the many Jewish sects which existed at the time of Christ: the famous sect of the Pharisees. Specifically, it is the continuation of that part of the sect of the Pharisees which did not accept Christ (others did, Saint Paul was a Pharsisee and so what is immensely famous teacher, [Saint Gamaliel the Elder](#))

(<http://orthodoxwiki.org/Gamaliel>). Besides being intellectually very sophisticated, one of the unique features of the Pharisees was that they met in “assemblies” to read the Scripture and worship. The word “assembly” in Greek (which was the *lingua franca* of the time) is συναγωγή “sinagoge” – or “synagogue” in modern English. When the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Legions of the Roman Emperor Titus in 70AD the Pharisees were the only ones that had a ready structure which could be used in the absence of the Temple, the synagogue.

Please keep in mind that as such there were no “rabbis”, at least not as an institution, before 70AD. There were priests and teachers and some teachers were addressed as ‘rabbi’, but ‘rabbinical Judaism’ (which what modern ‘Judaism’ really is did not exist at that time).

The other crucial feature of the Pharisees was that they (correctly) believed that not all of the teachings of God had been written down and that Oral Tradition was as important as the written one. Other Jewish sects, just like modern day Protestant denominations, insisted that *sola scriptura*.

There is no overstating the catastrophic importance of destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. Not only did it take away the place of worship around which the lives of all the Jews of the entire Middle-East centered at the time, but it also destroyed the building in which the Messiah had been predicted to come to preach and it happened at the time predicted by the Prophet Daniel. For those Jews who did not accept Christ, this was very, very bad news indeed. Something needed to be done urgently, and indeed it was. Here are the main axes this “response” took:

- 1) Under the pretext of correction and standardization the various Holy Books which we today think of as the “Old Testament” were expunged from the most evident passages which were referring to Christ. The Book of Psalms was especially butchered. A “new old Testament” of sorts was created by a group of scholars called the Masoretes who produced a fraud, a re-worked collection of texts we nowadays call the [Masoretic Text](#) of the Bible purged from all the key references to Christ (the *real* original text of the books of what we call today the Old Testament has not been preserved in Hebrew, but it exists in translations made from Hebrew into the Greek in the late 2nd century **BC** by 72 scholars working for Ptolemy

Philadelphius, hence the translation is called the Septuaginta or simply LXX).

- 2) A new class of teachers tasked with the “correct” interpretation of the written and oral traditions emerged, the rabbis. Their main task was the “explain” what had happened in 70AD and what that mean for the Jewish people.
- 3) A “new old Oral Tradition” was created and this time it was put in paper. This is what eventually became known as the Talmud (of which there are two, but nevermind that), the anti-Christian book *par excellence*.
- 4) Exactly in accordance with the words of Christ and the Apostles Paul and John the Evangelist, Devil-worship and black magic also soon were integrated into the “new old” corpus of traditions and this is the basis of what today is called the Kabbalah.
- 5) Finally, and logically, the focus of worship turned from a worship of God to self-worship. In this recent addition, it is the entire Jewish people which are the innocent and suffering Messiah and the so-called “Holocaust” is that mystical sacrifice from which the salvation of the world will come. In this latest school of thought, the Jews are collectively called to “fix/repair” the world, to do the work of the Messiah.

Okay, now before there is the usual tsunami of outraged comments spiced up with the usual accusations of anti-Semitism and the rest of the inevitable nonsense, let me tell you immediately that I have no intention at all to prove any of the above. I simply have no time for that. If you are interested, you can easily find all this information online, from books written by anti-Judaic scholars like Michael Hoffman to books written by authoritative Jewish scholars like Jacob Neusner. The latter will, of course, not at all put the same interpretation to these events as I do, but he will not disagree with the basic facts and chronology.

The point for me is this: you can take any good book or course on the history of what is called “Judaism” today and check for yourself that all the facts above are true. I particularly recommend “The Way of Torah: An Introduction to Judaism” by Jacob Neusner which, if I am not mistaken, exists in the form of audio lectures from the

Teaching Company's "Great Courses" series. From a non-Judaic perspective I recommend the books "Judaism's strange god" and, especially, the huge "Judaism Discovered" (over 1000 pages!) by Michael Hoffman. You can get them from an online bookstore or even in the form of a (possibly unauthorized and therefore free) PDF download. But even a short trip to your local library should give you enough confirmation that I am not making things up.

If you take the time to study the roots and evolution of what we called "Judaism", and which could be called something like "rabbinical/Phariseic Talmudism", you will come to the inevitable conclusion that modern "Judaism" is not the religion of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob but the religion of Maimonides, Karo and Luria. This religion has *nothing* in common with the religion of the Jewish people before Christ, just as modern Jews, especially the Ashkenazim, have no genetic connection to the Jewish people of 2000 years ago. We are dealing with a fraud whose main effort is to prove that it is the real thing, just as the Papacy is trying to prove that it is "the" original Church of Christ while in reality neither one of them have their roots in the times of Christ.

Depending on your personal beliefs there are only two religions today which can claim to be the real, true, continuation of the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: Orthodox Christianity (simply because it is the original form of Christianity which itself is the accomplishment of the ancient faith of the Jewish people) or Karaism (simply because it the closest non-Christian denomination to trace its roots to pre-Talmudic "Judaism" at least in the version of the Sect of the Sadducees).

I rather not have a long discussion about this fascinating, but complex, topic. I just wanted to explain why I wrote the modern Judaism is basically a form of anti-Christianity and try to clam down those who suffered a heart-attack or stroke from the indignation at hearing such a self-evidently ignorant and bigoted thought :-)

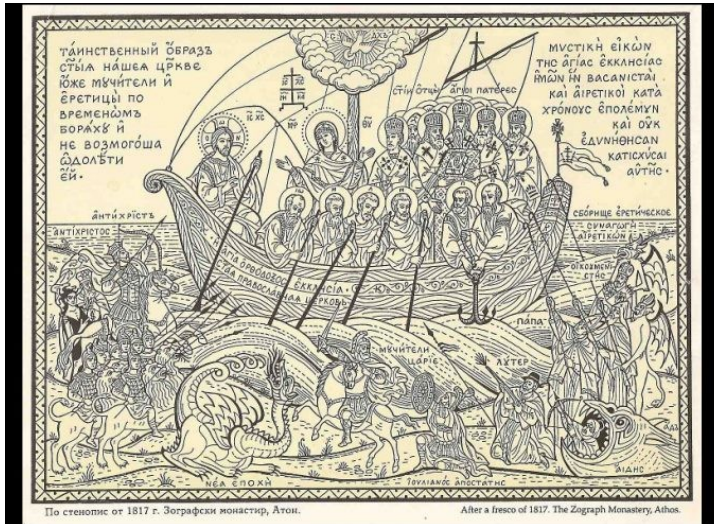
Now let's get back to the modern world and its numerous problems.

Cheers and kind regards,

The Saker

Orthodox Faith: Yvonne Lorenzo interviews the Saker

October 04, 2019



C.S. Lewis, in his preface to St Athanasius' [On the Incarnation](#), (<https://www.amazon.com/Incarnation-Saint-Athanasius-Popular-Patristics-ebook/dp/B00MZD343U>) urges us to study the classics. He lamented how today (his “today,” but equally if not more importantly our own) people are more interested to read about the great figures of the past rather than the works themselves. He emphasized the need to return to the classic texts of the past, both to expose our own all-too-often hidden presuppositions and to open ourselves to ways of thinking other than our own. This cannot be done, he points out, by reading the works of our contemporaries, for they too share our assumptions. “The only palliative,” Lewis wrote, “is to keep the clean sea breeze of the centuries blowing through our minds, and this can only be done by reading old books.”...When approached in this way, he concludes, we will find *On the Incarnation* to be a “masterpiece” and be astonished that “a master mind could, in the fourth century, have written deeply on such a subject with such classical simplicity.”

From the forward, written by Archpriest John Behr, D. Phil., to [The Orthodox Way](#) by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware.

https://www.amazon.com/Orthodox-Way-Kallistos/dp/0881416282/ref=sr_1_1?crid=27C2R7REVS3A8&keywords=the+orthodox+way+by+kallistos+ware&qid=1566505838&s=gateway&sprefix=orthodox+way+kalli%2Caps%2C362&sr=8-1

I recall a saying of the twentieth century that neither religion nor politics are to be discussed in polite company. Catholic himself, Lew Rockwell posted a link in his Political Theater blog on his website to an article about the Pope's proposed revision of The Lord's Prayer to change "[And lead us not into temptation,](#)" (<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6%3A9-13&version=KJV>) which spurred me [to email correspondence with The Saker](#) that was the genesis of this piece. (http://orthodoxinfo.com/praxis/cfc_lordsprayer.aspx)

As followers of my writings know, although I am myself no authority, I've written about Russia and her relationship with Washington and the West. My interest in the Orthodox Faith was piqued by listening to a recording of sacred songs by Dimitri Hvorostovsky, [The Bells of Dawn](#), ([https://www.amazon.com/Bells-Dawn-Russian-Sacred-Folk-Songs/dp/B00M15FN54?](https://www.amazon.com/Bells-Dawn-Russian-Sacred-Folk-Songs/dp/B00M15FN54?SubscriptionId=AKIAI63WS3YGA3Y5U2QA&tag=lrc18-20&linkCode=xm2&camp=2025&creative=165953&creativeASIN=B00M15FN54)

[SubscriptionId=AKIAI63WS3YGA3Y5U2QA&tag=lrc18-](#)

[20&linkCode=xm2&camp=2025&creative=165953&creativeASIN=B00M15FN54](#))

discussed in my article "[Zhuravli](#)", (<https://www.lewrockwell.com/2017/12/yvonne-lorenzo/zhuravli/>) and learning from the liner notes of the album that in Russian sacred music, instruments are not allowed, just the human voice. In addition, a website, [Russian Faith](#), (<https://russian-faith.com/>) posts several articles on the gradual resurgence of Christianity in formerly Communist Russia. (Please note that as The Saker explained to me, there is no "Russian Faith," for there is only the Orthodox Faith.) One of the greatest conductors of the Twentieth Century, [Yevgeny Mravinsky](#), (https://infogalactic.com/info/Yevgeny_Mravinsky) was a "secret Christian" in the time of the [Bolsheviks](#) in the Soviet Union. (<https://infogalactic.com/info/Bolsheviks>)

Perhaps best known for his writings as a (former) military analyst and historian, now posted to his website at [TheSaker.is](#) and as a frequent [contributor to the Unz Review](#), (<https://www.unz.com/author/the-saker/>) The Saker has also written frequently and with in-depth knowledge about the [Orthodox](#) (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Introduction_to_Orthodox_Christianity) Christian Way. In addition, he has founded this website, [Project HOP, History of the Orthodox Peoples](#), (<http://orthodoxhistory.info/>) which has texts and information available on line, especially for those on a budget who cannot afford the referenced books.

In what has frequently been described, and rightly so I believe, as "post-Christian" America, Christians are under attack. In this extremely hostile environment, one would think despite differences in interpretation of scripture and ritual, Christians

would try to learn more about one another and become mutually supportive, no matter their background. (Although I've never communicated with a "Christian Zionist" (which might be discussed here in the Orthodox Wiki as [Dispensationalism](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Dispensationalism)) (<https://orthodoxwiki.org/Dispensationalism>) as in the mold of Mike Pompeo or vice-president Pence and suspect any such interaction would be for naught, yet if individuals reading my words have such beliefs, I want them to know I respect their exercise of free will but I am concerned that their misinterpretation of Scripture and trying to bring about "End Times" will lead to disaster, recently detailed by investigative journalist Whitney Webb [to the point Mike Pompeo scared the CIA!](https://www.unz.com/article/the-untold-story-of-christian-zionisms-rise-to-power-in-the-united-states/) (<https://www.unz.com/article/the-untold-story-of-christian-zionisms-rise-to-power-in-the-united-states/>)

Again, in the spirit of reaching understanding and just for the joy of learning (How many Christians have studied or learned about Buddhism, for example?), I present my interview with the Saker. He has also kindly informed me about Orthodox religious texts, which will be cited below. (Please note these hyperlinks to Amazon.com to those books, and also the pictorial "widgets" to Amazon.com, might not display if the reader uses ad blocking software. I disable UBlock origin using the Brave Browser. I will also include below the title of what I believe are the best books for those who choose not to patronize Amazon and wish to support a local or more amenable retailer or check their local library for availability.

The single most important book, in my opinion, that The Saker introduced me to about Orthodox Theology is *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, Fr. Michael Pomazansky (Author), Fr. Seraphim Rose (Translator) published by St. Herman Press. The second I recommend contains a new translation of the Septuagint and commentary, *The Orthodox Study Bible, Hardcover: Ancient Christianity Speaks to Today's World* by St. Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology, published by Thomas Nelson. Internet resources include [Orthodox Wiki](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Main_Page) (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Main_Page) and less accurate translations of the Septuagint, including the [Brenton Translation](https://ebible.org/eng-Brenton/index.htm) (<https://ebible.org/eng-Brenton/index.htm>) and [E.C. Marsh's translation.](https://ecmarsh.com/lxx/) (<https://ecmarsh.com/lxx/>)

Yvonne Lorenzo: Saker, let me ask about your background first, if you don't mind discussing it. How did you come by your in-depth knowledge of Orthodox Christianity?

The Saker: I have [written about myself here](https://thesaker.is/submarines-in-the-desert-as-my-deepest-gratitude-to-you/). (https://thesaker.is/submarines-in-the-desert-as-my-deepest-gratitude-to-you/) My knowledge of the original Christianity came from the fact that my spiritual father was a Russian Orthodox Archbishop whom I considered as my real father from age seven to age twenty-seven when he passed away. Furthermore, since Geneva had a superb Orthodox cathedral with plenty of good experts I learned how to read Church Slavonic, I often sang and read the Psalter in church during services. Finally, in 2016 I finally completed by Licentiate in Orthodox Theological Studies (a graduate degree in Patristics, really) from the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies at the Saint Gregory Palamas Monastery in Etna, CA. The truth is that whether formally or informally, I have been studying Orthodox Christianity pretty much most of my life.

This being said, I am just a rank-and-file sinful layman whose sincerity should not be confused with any authority to speak on these matters. I will share only my private opinions and understanding of these matters.

Yvonne Lorenzo: Let me provide a little of my own background, not out of a desire of obtaining dopamine inducing narcissism from using Social Media like Twitter or Facebook, but to explain my exposure to Christian teachings. I'd rather not get in depth into the details of my experience in Church as a child; suffice it to say that the particular priest (now long deceased) in religious classes had a fondness for describing in graphic detail the horrors of the torture the Apostles and Saint endured (being skinned alive was certainly memorable, if not factual), and he was a most unpleasant, cruel man in my dealings with him; he certainly didn't believe "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" and I wouldn't mind so much if I was his target, but it was my ill mother, while my father's family were the ones with money and influence in the church, which I believe was the reason for his conduct.

Decades later, at the same church for a celebration that an aunt who was married to a late paternal uncle invited me and my brother to attend (and that priest was long since dead), an Archbishop was introduced in glowing terms due to his proximity to and friendship with prominent politicians and I recall in his speech at the end of the dinner, his describing how he pled with the Rockefellers for funds for Syrians (victims of the war), while evidently oblivious or willfully blind to the fact the elites in Washington with whom he cultivated his amicable relationships were the ones who initiated ISIS and the war on Syria.

In addition, I've noted that most Christians I've encountered in life are no different from anyone else. I don't mean to come off as misanthropic, nevertheless. Of course, there are exceptions but I'd describe these people as either "Churchians" or "Christian Pharisees" in that they observe various rituals, but they are all too often as vicious and treacherous as Darwinian atheists, that is, in their avarice, cruelty, greed, meanness and rudeness.

On the other hand, I've found Christians who were devout, no matter their particular faith—Orthodox, Catholic, Pentecostal, for example—who could be especially kind and generous, compassionate and the like. I recall you yourself writing that secular Jews were kinder to you than Christians. From a historical framework, the only time Western Christians truly followed the Way of Jesus Christ—in my opinion—were those few martyred individuals in World War One, who during the Christmas Truce stopped killing each other.

And in relatively recent history, if the majority of Germans were true Christians, I believe they'd never have followed Hitler or willingly committed atrocities, not only against Jews, but against brother Christians in Greece, Russia, and other nations they invaded and occupied. Classical Greek scholar Edith Hamilton has written that Christians in their conduct "have failed the world." I'd appreciate your perspective on my observations and your thoughts, as an Orthodox Christian, what does it mean to be Christian truly, that is to be a follower of "The Way" of Jesus Christ? Of course I understand you have to simplify for reasons of time and space; I'm sure whole books are available on the topic, but I propose getting to the core, which I suspect has simplicity at its heart.

The Saker: Yes, [regarding the kindness of secular Jews] that is absolutely true. I don't think that way and I don't use racial/ethnic categories myself, but if I had to say which ethnicity/tribe has been most kind to me in my life, I would certainly reply "secular Jews" who, at least in my strictly personal experience, have not only been kind, but also very generous!

As a fatherless kid, I was pretty poor and my mother had a very hard time buying me stuff. I had a close personal friend who was not only 1-2 years older than me, but also a few centimeters taller. So he would always give me his used stuff, including used bicycles, diving suits, records, CDs, guitars, etc. His small family (mom, grandma and

him) was small for a very specific reason: **all the rest of his family (Jews from Holland) was murdered by the Nazis**. Fifteen people if I remember correctly.

After that, this ultra-religious family become hardcore atheistic since they could not imagine that God would allow such people (simple, innocent and deeply pious) to be murdered en masse. Honestly, I have no idea where the notion that Jews are greedy came from. Possibly envy. In my experience Jews are very “money aware” and skilled at making money (I wish I had that skill!), but they are also typically very generous. At least I never met a greedy Jew in my 55 years of life in this planet, and I’ve met A LOT of Jews in my life. Furthermore, my childhood pattern was repeated over and over again: Jews were very often kind and generous towards me (and my family members) and in some of the darkest hours of my life, secular Jews showed my **far more** kindness than my supposed Christian brothers. The same goes for Muslims, by the way. I am sad to say this, but the truth is the truth, even if it shames me.

Now I think of these secular Jews as my “good Samaritans”.

As for Christians, the real ones are typically rather poor. I cannot explain why this is the case here, but I will recommend these two books on anybody wanting to understand the real, original, pre-usury times Christian views on wealth:

[Saint John Chrysostom On Wealth and Poverty](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/088141039X)

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/088141039X>

[Saint Basil the Great On Social Justice](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0881410535/)

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0881410535/>

These are small booklets, written in modern English, an “easy read” by any standard, and if you read them you will immediately realize that what [the] so-called “Christians” are saying, doing and even teaching today has nothing in common with the original Christianity.

As for the (very few) rich AND pious Orthodox Christians, they are just as generous as the Orthodox poor. Wealth is not always bad, it can be God-pleasing, but as we know from the Gospels, it is **almost** impossible for a wealthy person to be saved, yet all things are possible to God.

See what Saint Basil the Great wrote to those with wealth: “*Oh mortal, recognize your Benefactor! Consider yourself, who you are, what resources have been entrusted to*

you, from whom you received them, and why you received more than others. You have been made a minister of God's goodness, a steward of your fellow servants. Do not suppose that all this was furnished for your own gullet! Resolve to treat the things in your possession as belonging to others“.

What is certain, however, is that ***Christ's Kingdom is NOT of this world*** and we, Christians, are called to *live* in the world, but not be *of the world*:

“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” Christ even told us that, ***“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.”***

Modern “post-Christian pseudo-Christians” do not understand that. They somehow manage to delude themselves with the notion that capitalism can be compatible with Christianity. Truly, it is “either, or”. As Christ Himself said, *“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”* (Matt 6:24). Ask yourself, what is capitalism at its core, as a worldview? Simply put, it is an worldview and ideology which claims that the sum of our greed will result in an optimally organized society. What folly! Imagine what Christ or the Fathers would have to say about such demonically inspired nonsense!

Some modern self-described Christians think that Christ's True Church must be the one with most members or most money. Other modern “post-Christian/pseudo-Christians” believe that Christ's Church is the one with the holy places (cathedrals, beautiful churches, monasteries), or the one which the regime in power happens to find politically more useful. This is how many of our clueless contemporaries think. The Apostles and the Fathers knew better. And there are still a few relatively small traditionalist Orthodox communities which live by these ancient but truly Christian rules. But you are unlikely to find them where the Powers That Be are.

You wrote *“I've noted that most Christians I've encountered in life are no different from anyone else”* and you are absolutely correct. The Church is not and has never been an “exclusive club for saints.” Quite the opposite: ***the Church is a hospital for sinners!*** There is no over-stressing the importance of this fact. Let me repeat, the Church is a hospital for sinners and you could even say that if you are a sinner, you qualify! Yes, of course, there are also “saints” in this Church, you can think of them as the “treating physicians” who having found the “cure” (*theosis*) now help other heals. I strongly recommend that anybody not knowing what “theosis” is carefully read this

article: <http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/theosis.aspx>. (It is available in 10 different languages!)

Saint Athanasius of Alexandria taught that “*For the Son of God became man so that we might become God*” (by uniting with God’s uncreated energies, not His Essence!). He was just summarizing a very ancient Patristic teaching on “theosis” which all the other major saints (Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Saint Maximos the Confessor, Saint Gregory Palamas, etc.) fully agreed with this teaching and expanded upon it. It is not easy to find good sources on Christian ecclesiology online, especially in English, but here is what I found: (in no special order):

- Saint Cyprian of Carthage “[On the Unity of the Church](#)”
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf05.iv.v.i.html>
- Saint Metropolitan Philaret “[Will the Heterodox Be Saved?](#)”
http://orthodoxinfo.com/inquirers/metphil_heterodox.aspx
- Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili “[And Who Is My Neighbor?](#)”
<http://orthodoxinfo.com/praxis/whoismyneighbor.aspx>
- Alexei Khomiakov “[The Church is One](#)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/church_is_one_e.htm
- Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky) “[Christianity or the Church](#)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/christianity_church_e.htm
- Right Reverend Photios, Bishop of Triaditza, “[Orthodox Unity Today](#)”
http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/unity_today.aspx
- Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky “[On the Church](#)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/invisible_church_pomazansky.htm
- St. Justin (Popovich) “[The Attributes of the Church](#)” <http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/attributes.aspx>
- Dr. Alexander Kalomiros “[Orthodox Ecclesiology](#)”
<http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/kalomiros.aspx>
- Saint John Chrysostom “[The Character and Temptations of a Bishop](#)”
http://www.holytrinitymission.org/books/english/priesthood_john_chrysostom.htm%22%20/1%20%22_Toc6623361

- Archpriest Georges Florovsky “[The Catholicity of the Church](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/catholicity_church_florovsky.htm)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/catholicity_church_florovsky.htm
- Archpriest Georges Florovsky “[The Limits of the Church](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/limits_church.htm)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/limits_church.htm
- Archpriest Georges Florovsky “[On Church and Tradition](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/church_tradition_florovsky.htm)”
http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/church_tradition_florovsky.htm
Hieromonk Seraphim Rose “[The Royal Path: True Orthodoxy in an Age of Apostasy](https://www.hsir.org/pdfs/2009/09/02/20090902aRoyalPath%20Folder/20090902aRoyalPath.pdf)”
<https://www.hsir.org/pdfs/2009/09/02/20090902aRoyalPath%20Folder/20090902aRoyalPath.pdf>
- Bishop Artemije of Raška and Prizren “[Deification as the End and Fulfillment of Salvation According to St. Maximos the Confessor](https://www.hsir.org/pdfs/2009/03/26/20090326aGiatiEnsB7%20Folder/20090326aGiatiEnsB7.pdf)”
<https://www.hsir.org/pdfs/2009/03/26/20090326aGiatiEnsB7%20Folder/20090326aGiatiEnsB7.pdf>

Finally, there is a wealth of excellent articles on this website: <https://www.fatheralexander.org/page6.htm> and a very authentic and traditional “*Confession of Faith of Genuine Orthodox Christian*” here: <https://www.hsir.org/pdfs/2015/10/29/E20151029aOmologiaPisteos/E20151029aOmologiaPisteos.pdf>

The above is a mix of very different authors and texts, but between them, you have a good primer for the study of Christian ecclesiology (along with a few names of good modern theologians).

Yvonne Lorenzo: Regarding my studies of the Bible at a liberal arts university now over forty-five years ago, I recall the Professor stating the text of the Hebrew “Old Covenant,” as he described it, made no mention of a virgin regarding the “virgin birth,” but instead referenced a young girl and how Jesus when saying during the loaves and fishes to “eat of my flesh” wanted to make the Jews vomit—along those lines. In addition, the assumption also was taught that the resurrection was added later, as were the prophecies of the destruction of the temple and I recall an odd remark, that the Pharisees were anachronistic, being from a later era. To the contrary, you made me aware of the [Septuagint](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Septuagint) (<https://orthodoxwiki.org/Septuagint>) that contradicts the “scholarship” I was introduced to; and I found this excellent article posted on the website Russian Faith (although you informed me “Russian faith” is a misnomer; there is only the Orthodox Faith) titled “[Russian Bibles Are Very Different](#)”

from American Ones. Here's Why".

(<https://russian-faith.com/explaining-orthodoxy/russian-bibles-are-totally-different-american-ones-heres-why-n1470>) Below is an important excerpt from that article, which also provided evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls:

Indeed, I used to believe the Masoretic Text was a perfect copy of the original Old Testament. I used to believe that the Masoretic Text was how God divinely preserved the Hebrew Scriptures throughout the ages.

I was wrong.

The oldest copies of the Masoretic Text only date back to the 10th century, nearly 1000 years after the time of Christ. And these texts differ from the originals in many specific ways. The Masoretic text is named after the Masoretes, who were scribes and Torah scholars who worked in the middle-east between the 7th and 11th centuries. The texts they received, and the edits they provided, ensured that the modern Jewish texts would manifest a notable departure from the original Hebrew Scriptures.

Your response was to my posting on your website of an English translation of the Second Psalm which was my own response to a comment by a Russian who cited it on a piece on your site on the depravity of the elites; I used the New International Version, not as beautiful as the King James but perhaps more comprehensible to readers in the Twenty-first century. I have become aware of a more modern translation of Septuagint by Oxford University Press in “modern language” and although the British to me—at least in their power circles and government—are unreliable, from my review I think the scholarship presented is sound (they use the word “Anointed” in the Second Psalm and that means the Messiah). I will post after we finish our conversations the King James version, The New International version, and the Septuagint translations by Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton of the Second Psalm, which you sent me, and finally Oxford’s N.E.T.S. Please elaborate for our readers.

The Saker: [I've discussed the](https://thesaker.is/non-political-interlude-reply-to-two-posts-religions-haters-please-skip-this-one/) Septuagint on my website (<https://thesaker.is/non-political-interlude-reply-to-two-posts-religions-haters-please-skip-this-one/>) and I quote:

In answer to whether the Scripture was corrupted: Yes and no. Yes it was, but never successfully. Let me explain why.

First, if you accept that God did communicate with mankind by means of prophecy and that the prophets did put down the prophecies which they received, you would wonder why then God would let men distort or otherwise corrupt the message He sent us. Of course, all man can err, we are all sinful, and either by mistake or deliberately man have corrupted the Scripture, no question here, the pertinent question is rather could these men have gotten away with that?

*In the Third book of Esdras we have an interesting episode. Esdras tells God that the Scripture has been burned and asks, “If then I have found favor before thee, send the **Holy Spirit** into me, and I will write everything that has happened in the world from the beginning, the things which were written in thy law, that men may be able to find the path, and that those who wish to live in the last days may live.”*

To which God replies “Go and gather the people, and tell them not to seek you for forty days. But prepare for yourself many writing tablets, and take with you Sarea, Dabria, Selemia, Ethanus, and As'iel—these five, because they are trained to write rapidly; and you shall come here, and I will light in your heart the lamp of understanding, which shall not be put out until what you are about to write is finished.”

*And, sure enough, Esdras tells us, “So I took the five men, as he commanded me, and we proceeded to the field, and remained there. And on the next day, behold, a voice called me, saying, “Ezra, **open your mouth and drink what I give you to drink.**” Then I opened my mouth, and behold, a full cup was offered to me; it was full of something like water, but its color was like fire. And I took it and drank; and when I had drunk it, my heart poured forth understanding, and wisdom increased in my breast, for my spirit retained its memory; and my mouth was opened, and was no longer closed. And the Most High gave understanding to the five men, and by turns they wrote what was dictated, in characters which they did not know. They sat forty days, and wrote during the daytime, and ate their bread at night. As for me, I spoke in the daytime and was not silent at night. So during the forty days ninety-four books were written. And when the forty days were ended, the Most High spoke to me, saying, “Make public the twenty-four books that you wrote first and let the worthy and the unworthy read them; but keep the seventy that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among*

your people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge.” And I did so.

Sorry for the long quote, but I want to illustrate a point: when needed God can command his faithful to restore even the full Scripture provided a) that they are worthy to receive the guidance of the Holy Spirit and b) that they receive the “drink like fire” which God gives them (note that this book was written long before the times of Christ!). What is certain is that the notion that God would grant a revelation through His prophets and then allow that revelation to remain corrupted for centuries is rather ludicrous.

There was, indeed, one grievous attempt at falsifying the Scripture. It occurred after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. At that time the Jewish people were separated into two sects: those who believed that Christ was the Messiah and those who did not. The former become known as Christians, while the latter—mostly Pharisees—created their own group which developed a new spirituality which switched focus from the Old Testament to the Talmud, from the Temple to assemblies (synagogues), from priests to rabbis and from the original Scripture to a new “corrected” text. This texts had the official *imprimatur* of the rabbis who declared that it has been corrected by their sages, the scribes and scholars. Needless to say, what they really did is cut out or alter those parts of the Scripture which were inconvenient to them. At the time there was a great deal of hostility between the two groups and disputations centered around the Scripture, of course. The issue at hand was simple: did the prophesies about the Messiah in the scripture match what actually happened in the life of Christ or not? Could the followers of Christ prove their case by using the Scripture? Well, the “guardians of the tradition”, or “[Masoretes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masoretes)” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masoretes) as they became known, “corrected” the Scripture as much as possible to produce a forgery known today as the “[Masoretic text](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masoretic_text)” (abbreviated MT). (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masoretic_text)

Christians immediately saw through that and denounced the text as a fake. One of the earliest documents we have showing that Christians at the time were fully aware that the Jews produced a forgery is the “[Dialog with Trypho](http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/justinmartyr-dialoguetrypho.html)” (http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/justinmartyr-dialoguetrypho.html) in which [Saint Justin Martyr](http://orthodoxwiki.org/Justin_Martyr) (2nd century) (http://orthodoxwiki.org/Justin_Martyr) explicitly makes that accusation. The latter Fathers have also confirmed that.

You might wonder which text is the original and what happened to it. We only have parts of the original Hebrew “Old Testament” (which is, of course, not what they called it). Following the conquests of Alexander the Great much of what is today the Middle-East was “Hellenized” and the language of the elites and the international language of the time was Greek. About two centuries before the birth of Christ, at the request of the local (Greek) ruler, [Ptolemy II Philadelphus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemy_II_Philadelphus), (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemy_II_Philadelphus) a translation into Greek of the Hebrew text was made for the famous [Library of Alexandria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Library_of_Alexandria) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Library_of_Alexandria) by 70 translators from the twelve tribes of Israel. This text is called the [Septuagint](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Septuagint) (abbreviated **LXX**) (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Septuagint) in memory of these seventy translators. This is the **only** text ever considered authoritative by the [Orthodox] Church. Following the Latin schism, the LXX was almost forgotten in western Europe where the Latin Church used a translation made by Saint Jerome called the [Vulgate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_Vulgate). (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_Vulgate) Because the Latins believed that only the “learned” clergy should read the Scripture and then teach and explain it to the “simple” folks, this text was not very widely circulated.

In contrast, Luther wanted each Christian to have access to the Scripture. Luther, who was opposed to the Latin clericalism and who suspected that the Latins might have corrupted the text, decided to base his teaching on what he apparently sincerely believed was the “original” Hebrew text, the Masoretic forgery. As a result, the vast majority of Bibles available in the Western World are based on a text deliberately forged by Christ-hating rabbis, including the (otherwise beautifully written) King James Version. More recently, newer “corrected” versions of the MT have been made, but there is still only one, rather bad, translation of the LXX in English, the so-called “Brenton translation” (I hear that a new one is being worked on). But until very recently the West was simply too proud and too ignorant of Patristic thought to remember that only the LXX was the true text of the Old Testament.

I am going into all these details to illustrate a point: yes, Holy Writ can, and has been, corrupted both deliberately (Masorettes) or by ignorance (western Bibles). But **God never allows the original true text to simply vanish.**

I would also note that what the rabbis attempted is first and foremost a substitution: LXX by MT. They never claimed that the MT was the LXX. In fact, some Jewish holidays (such as [Hanukkah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanukkah)) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanukkah) have no

scriptural basis in the MT but only in the LXX (in the book of Maccabees in this case). Unlike the West, the Jews never forgot about the LXX—they simply did not want to grant it authoritative status, for quite obvious reasons.

There are some sources which claim that an attempt to corrupt the LXX was also made by Jews, but I have seen no good evidence of that. For one thing, the LXX was simply too widely circulated (not as one text, but as a collection of books) to suddenly substitute another text. Really, the creation of the MT was for “internal consumption” and to beat back Christian polemicists.

So here is my main point: there is **zero** historical evidence to attest to the corruption of the original Holy Scripture. The only known case is the one I outlined above. We also know from the Scripture itself that God would never deprive his faithful from His Word, the example of Esdras (aka Ezra) above also shows that. Furthermore, simple logic suggests to us that it is impossible to corrupt a text which is both 1) widely circulated **and** 2) very closely analyzed and held [as] sacred.

Let me conclude here by saying that I personally believe that the Prophet Muhammad did hear about the Masoretic forgery and that this inspired him to look at the Christian Scripture with a strong suspicion that the text had been forged. Obviously, like Luther, he was not aware of the LXX. It is also possible that Muhammad might have had another reason to declare that the Christian scripture was corrupted: the so-called Old Testament has absolutely no prophecy speaking of any figure like Muhammad, this is why some Muslim scholars have had to declare that the “Comforter” mentioned by Christ to His disciples was a reference to Muhammad and not to the Holy Spirit, an interpretation which even a superficial reading of the New Testament immediately invalidates and which not a single Church Father or theologian between the first and seventh century endorsed.

Whatever may be the case, the Muslim theory that the Scripture has been successfully corrupted is both illogical and a-historical. One can, of course, chose to believe it, especially if one accepts that everything, including the historical record, has been forged, corrupted or lost, but at least to me faith and common sense should not contradict each other.

I think that it is undeniable that Christianity grew out of the religion of the Jewish people before the birth of Christ. Christ Himself constantly makes references to the books the Church has united into one volume called the “Old Testament”. If the topic

is of interest to you, see all the texts on [this](#) page (<http://fatheralexander.org/page8.htm>), especially [this](#) one (http://fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/prophecies_christ.htm) and [this](#) one. (http://fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/old_testament_messiah.htm) In contrast, Islam has no other scriptural basis that itself or, rather, the book it produced: the Quran. We are dealing with a typical circular validation, a logical fallacy.

In conclusion I want to say that a closer look at history shows that the notion of “Judaeo-Christian” is simply at least as nonsensical as speaking of a White-Black or a Dry-Wet. As for the so-called “Abrahamic religions” they truly have nothing in common. Modern Judaism is really nothing else but an “anti-Christianity” while Islam is a faith which appeared *ex-nihilo* and has no basis in either Jewish or Christian scripture or oral tradition.

I hope that I have not offended anybody here, especially not my Muslim friends and readers, but I felt that it was important to lay out here the **original** Christian understanding of these issues. As any other Orthodox Christian I strongly feel that it is my personal obligation to preserve that which has been passed on to me (the “corporate memory and awareness” of the Church, if you want) and to share it with others if or when it is appropriate. As (I hope) intelligent and considerate people, we can “agree to disagree”, but to do that, you need to be made aware of the nature of what we might disagree on, right?

Yvonne Lorenzo: The popular personality Jordan B. Peterson writes in his multi-million copy selling book *12 Rules for Life* about Scripture. I don't know if he's ever read even any work of scholarship, much less an Orthodox one. He differentiates between the Old Testament God, whom he describes as “harsh, judgmental, unpredictable, and dangerous” and as a person who doesn't care what people think. “It was the realists who created, or noticed, the Old Testament God.” The “New Testament God” he describes as “master craftsman and benevolent father. He wants nothing for us but the best. He is all-loving and all forgiving. Sure, He'll send you to Hell if you misbehave badly enough.” In addition, he writes, “Who but the most naïve among us could posit than an all-good, merciful Being ruled this so-terrible world.” Regarding the Fall, he wrote, “The Biblical narrative of Paradise and the Fall is one such story, fabricated by our collective imagination, working over the centuries...After much contemplation, struggling humanity learns that God's favour could be gained, and his

wrath averted, through proper sacrifice—and that bloody murder might be motivated among those unwilling or unable to succeed in this matter.”

Even Moody’s commentary on The Bible using the Masoretic text of Genesis points out Petersen’s grave errors; I refer to his writing because he has a following on YouTube numbered in millions and I’m sure more people in America have read his book discussing Christianity than studied the Bible.

On a personal level, when I’ve written about Christian matters on LewRockwell.com, I’ve received angry emails, one of which stated in effect that only a monstrous god would demand the blood sacrifice of his son as payment for his wrath. Please address not only the Fall but the Orthodox perspective on these key issues, which I realize are critical: human nature, indeed the world itself, Nature itself, is not what it was supposed to be. I’ve also read [Surprised by Christ: My Journey From Judaism to Orthodox Christianity](https://www.amazon.com/Surprised-Christ-Journey-Orthodox-Christianity/dp/1888212950) by Rev. James A. Bernstein who discussed these matters from an Orthodox perspective. (<https://www.amazon.com/Surprised-Christ-Journey-Orthodox-Christianity/dp/1888212950>)

The Saker: This silly notion is what is left over from the western scholasticism. To make a very long story short, [Augustine of Hippo](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Augustine_of_Hippo) (4th century) (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Augustine_of_Hippo) had, among very good and valid ideas, a mistaken notion about the dogma of the [Original Sin](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Original_sin). (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Original_sin) His mistakes were picked up and further developed by [Anselm of Canterbury](https://infogalactic.com/info/Anselm_of_Canterbury) (12th century) (https://infogalactic.com/info/Anselm_of_Canterbury) and by [Thomas Aquinas](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Thomas_Aquinas) (13th century) (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Thomas_Aquinas) As a result, the West acquired a **completely legalistic notion** of the dogma of redemption which can roughly be summarized like so:

“Man offended God, so God punished man, but the suffering of man as a result of the Original Sin was not good enough to appease God’s anger. But when His Son was crucified for the sins of man, then God was satisfied because the sufferer had an equal “value” as the offended party, God Himself—that is Christ.”

This obsession with the suffering of Christ and the suffering of man (on earth or in the so-called “purgatory” also invented by Western theologians) is typical of Western Christianity.

The East has a mystical understanding of the Dogma of Redemption which can again, very roughly, be summarized as such:

As a consequence of Adam's original sin, suffering and death have entered the previously perfect soul of man who, being the nexus between the material world and spiritual world also 'infected' all of Creation with decay, suffering and death. Christ 'emptied Himself' to become God-Man, the Theanthropos, and fully assumed man's nature. Thus, while through the actions of the First Adam mankind lapsed, through the actions of the Second Adam mankind can be saved. On the Holy and Life-giving Cross Christ, even though He Himself was sinless, voluntary took upon himself the two most horrible consequences of Adam's sin, suffering and death, and then He defeated 'death by death.' Thus by His Resurrection Christ made it possible for the new and renewed man to become a 'little Christ' by uniting with the uncreated energies of God.

I apologize for the summary/simplification above, but to explain this dogma fully and correctly a full lecture would be necessary.

So no, God is not a bloodthirsty God and all the blood sacrifices in the Old Testament are but a mystical prefiguration of the Eucharist.

Of course, the God of the Orthodox/Haredi Jews is a hateful, vengeful, racist and generally maniacal God. But we all know what Saint John wrote about the "Synagogue of Satan" composed of Jews who pretend to be Jews, but whose father is the devil.

Yvonne Lorenzo: LewRockwell.com recently published this piece on the evil of the so-called "elites" titled "[Jeffrey Epstein and the Spectacle of Secrecy](https://www.lewrockwell.com/2019/08/edward-curtin/jeffrey-epstein-and-the-spectacle-of-secrecy/)," (<https://www.lewrockwell.com/2019/08/edward-curtin/jeffrey-epstein-and-the-spectacle-of-secrecy/>) in which its author, Edward Curtin, writes the following:

Those of us who oppose these criminals – and there are growing numbers all over the world – must avoid being sucked into the establishment narratives and the counter-narratives they spawn or create. We must refuse to get involved in pseudo-debates that are meant to lead nowhere. We must reject the language created to confuse.

If revolutionary change is to come, we must learn to tell a new story in language so beautiful, illuminating, and heart-rending that no one will listen to the lying words of child molesters, mass murderers, and those who hate and

persecute truth tellers.

As John Berger said, “In storytelling everything depends on what follows what. And the truest order is seldom obvious.”

His conclusion is more, to me, of an amorphous conception “humanist” perspective of coping with evil. I’ve written on the “Occult Elite” as well in “[Epstein & Q-Anon: A Match Made in Cyberspace.](https://www.lewrockwell.com/2019/08/yvonne-lorenzo/epstein-q-anon-a-match-made-in-cyberspace/)” (<https://www.lewrockwell.com/2019/08/yvonne-lorenzo/epstein-q-anon-a-match-made-in-cyberspace/>) How does an Orthodox Christian respond to the “powers” in this world? Do you have advice?

The Saker: Yes, and the first most obvious piece of advice is “do **NOT** ask for *my opinion*” or, for that matter, the opinion of anybody currently living (there are exceptions, but most people are unaware of them). Can you guess what you could have asked instead? **What would THE FATHERS advise us in our situation?** That would make it an “Orthodox question.” What would the Fathers say? They would urge you to immerse yourself in the following:

- The writings of the Church Fathers (this is absolutely crucial!!!) starting with the [Philocalia](https://www.lewrockwell.com/2019/08/yvonne-lorenzo/epstein-q-anon-a-match-made-in-cyberspace/) (<https://www.lewrockwell.com/2019/08/yvonne-lorenzo/epstein-q-anon-a-match-made-in-cyberspace/>) (which you can download by clicking here:

[Volume 1,](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B_zp8XQuBifgeEdhQ252LWRnVFE/edit)
(https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B_zp8XQuBifgeEdhQ252LWRnVFE/edit)

[Volume 2,](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B_zp8XQuBifgNEZYSVJhcFdmUVE/edit)
(https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B_zp8XQuBifgNEZYSVJhcFdmUVE/edit)

[Volume 3](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B_zp8XQuBifgUHZIZW5xbIJVMzg/edit)
(https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B_zp8XQuBifgUHZIZW5xbIJVMzg/edit)

[Volume 4.](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B_zp8XQuBifgc2ZleE9mZjRVRE0/edit)
(https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B_zp8XQuBifgc2ZleE9mZjRVRE0/edit)
- The Lives of the Saints, including [Western saints](https://www.easternchristiansupply.biz/-#books/c14/c4061/a16418), (<https://www.easternchristiansupply.biz/-#books/c14/c4061/a16418>) and the [real thing](https://www.easternchristiansupply.biz/-#books/c14/c15634) (<https://www.easternchristiansupply.biz/-#books/c14/c15634>) (also see [here](http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/gen_saints.aspx)) (http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/gen_saints.aspx) of course, not the syrupy nonsense written by the Latins (including the liturgical canons associated with their feast days!)

- Books on the history of the Churches (except those written by modern historians and “theologians” which, with a few notable exceptions, are typically worthless since their authors are much more concerned with making a name for themselves in western academia rather than with conveying through their books the true Orthodox mindset or “spirit of the Fathers” (*phronema ton pateron*) or, for that matter, the “consensus of the Fathers” which expresses the “general conscience of the Church” (*he genike syneidesis tes ekklesias*). Stay away from those “brilliant” “theologians”!)

Specifically, they would remind you that the Prophets, Christ, the Apostles, the Fathers and the Church all gave us a very big body of revealed knowledge about the End Times. They all warned about mass apostasy, about materialism, about persecutions, about heresies, about the “stars falling from the heavens” (which the Fathers understood as referring to **apostatizing bishops** and not as an astronomical event!). They will all tell you that the True Church of Christ will be persecuted and will shrink to a very small, but very spiritually strong, entity. They finally tell you that Evil will prevail and that only the Second Coming will defeat the Antichrist (a belief we share with the Muslims, by the way!).

A decade ago or more, one Russian theologian wrote a rather controversial article he entitled “*The ecclesiology of a retreating Church*.” His article was all in all okay, but the title I find especially brilliant. Yes, we Christians love life, and we don’t seek death (even if we are told to be ready to accept it joyfully and gratefully should we become martyred by the *theomachs* (enemies of God, all the many categories included) or should we give up our lives in defense of others). But neither are we under any illusion about what “the world” has in store for us. After all, in order to “imitate Christ” we have to also accept Golgotha, should that end be God’s will for us.

Yvonne Lorenzo: I’d like to ask you for the Orthodox interpretation of (King James Translation) [Romans 13](https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Romans-Chapter-13/): (<https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Romans-Chapter-13/>)

- 1) Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.
- 2) Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.
- 3) For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be

afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4) For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5) Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

6) For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7) Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

A commentator and writer named The Bionic Mosquito wrote in "[Christians and Government](#)"

(<https://www.lewrockwell.com/2018/07/bionic-mosquito/christians-and-government/>) that if we interpret these authorities as government, "then I am sure that what Paul meant by this was that Mary and Joseph should have turned the newborn Jesus into Herod's grasp."

He also wrote:

One has to view Romans 13 in isolation if one wants to make of it Biblical support for any and all earthly government authorities. But it is even worse than this:

Whereas some English translations use the word "governing" in verse 1, the Greek text does not. It reads "Let every soul be subject to the superior powers."

Who, or what, are these "superior powers"? The Romans? Or God? Paul seems to answer this implicitly, certainly if one respects the context provided in the preceding chapter of Romans: "Do not be conformed to the world..." Instead, conform to God's will.

There is nothing in Romans chapter 12 or 13 to suggest that the beginning of Romans 13 be interpreted as unconditional support for earthly government. There is little, if anything, in all of Scripture that supports such an interpretation.

When Paul has written about submitting to leaders in other books of the Bible, he has referred to Church authorities. Is it possible that in Romans 13, he was writing of

earthly authorities – the same authorities that were persecuting members of the faith? In Romans 13, Paul writes of those wearing the sword, do we not elsewhere read of putting on the armor of God?

Please provide the Orthodox interpretation of Romans 13.

The Saker: First, I think the first step is to ignore what insects (bionic or not) have to say about the Scripture and turn, where else, to the Fathers (especially those insects who refer to the holy, glorious, all-laudable Apostle Paul simply as “Paul” as if talking about a buddy of theirs).

See [here](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2102.htm). (<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2102.htm>) Most people are spiritually sick. Our condition, after The Fall, is one of a fallen creature. Thus we believe that life is a type of pathology and the ‘cure’ for it is the Church; see [here](http://www.romanity.org/html/rom.20.en.the_sickness_of_religion_and_its_cure.01.htm). (http://www.romanity.org/html/rom.20.en.the_sickness_of_religion_and_its_cure.01.htm)

In addition, Romans 13:1-7 states:

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Romans is one of the most complex books of the Bible and a full discussion of Patristic commentaries on Romans should be a semester long seminar. The systematic thing to do would be to collect as many Patristic commentaries as possible, then see not only the letter of these commentaries, but also the spirit. We cannot do that here, so all I can offer is a few very simplified and summarized thoughts on this topic.

The first thing we need to remember here is Christ's words: "*Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*" (Matt 22:21). This makes sense, since we know that Christ's Kingdom is not of this world. However, what is in this world are the Church and the members of that Church. The second thing we can clearly note is that, using the terminology of modern-day libertarians, Christ and the original Church were most definitely "statists" meaning that they believed not only that having a state is *acceptable*, they believed that it was fundamentally *needed*. The Fathers believed that the state, as such, is a God-ordained element of a healthy human society. In fact, they saw that the state can even play the role of the "restrainer" or "the one who restrains" meaning that the state is what stands between chaos and order or even that the state can create the conditions in which the Church can safely and freely exist or even be protected. Of course, each case is different and the Church, which is a living organism, assesses the posture on a case by case basis.

The Church does not promote one political order over another. Still, there are roughly three main possible categories of state:

- 1) The state with an Orthodox ruler/government which proactively protects the Church and tries to create as truly Christian a society as possible. No, this is NOT a "theocracy" or some kind of "Caesaropapism" (these are categories mostly used by clueless modern wannabe "theologians"). Typically, this would be monarchy. But not just any monarchy (monarchies are like democracies or people's republics — they come in all sorts of flavors) it would have to be a truly Christian monarchy (a minority in history) which would create the conditions of a "symphony" between the state and the Church.
- 2) A state in which state and Church are completely separated. Well, if they are **truly** separated, then this is still acceptable to a Christian who has the direct obligation to respect the laws of the state he/she lives under. However, in many (most?) cases the state which is supposed to be totally separated from the Church ends up *actively promoting anti-Christian ideas and values*. Even in this case, the Christian cannot defy the state or break its laws (at least not without a very strong and compelling argument).
- 3) And then there is the state of "enemies of God," militant atheists which persecute the Church and all true Christians. Enemies of the Church are referred to as "*theomachs*" (in Greek) or "*bogobortsy*" in Russian. The best example I can think of is the Bolshevik state which seized power from the short-lived Masonic Kerensky "democracy" (in reality: total, abject chaos) and

immediately embarked on a massive, truly genocidal, persecution of all religions but especially the Russian Orthodox Church which the Bolsheviks (mostly rabidly Russophobic atheistic Jews) hated with a burning, truly demonic passion. This kind of state is not a state which the Orthodox Christian “may” obey. This is the kind of state which the Orthodox Christian is **obligated** to oppose, even at the risk of his/her life because doing anything else would be an act of apostasy, especially if the lapsed Christian begins actively supporting that theomachic state.

I will use the example of the Bolshevik state to illustrate this point.

When the Bolsheviks took power the Russian Orthodox Church split into roughly 4 groups:

- 1) Those who openly rejected the submission of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Bolshevik state. They are often referred to by the name of their leader, Metropolitan Joseph or Petrograd: the “**Josephites**.”
- 2) Those who did not openly reject the submission of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Bolshevik state but who practiced their faith clandestinely. They are often called the “**Catacomb Church**.”
- 3) Those who decided to flee from these persecutions and go into exile. They were called the “**Russian Orthodox Church in Exile**.” See [here](https://rocorhistory.blogspot.com/2008/07/history-of-roca-by-st-john-maximovitch.html) for a summary history. (<https://rocorhistory.blogspot.com/2008/07/history-of-roca-by-st-john-maximovitch.html>)
- 4) Those who decided to accept the submission of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Bolshevik’s state because they believed that by collaborating with the state the bishop and priests were actually “saving the Church” from total destruction. These folks often explain that the clergymen who did agree to collaborate with the theomachs by denouncing true Christians to the Soviet secret police, by saying that the Christian Church and theomachic state are in full solidarity with each other and by saying that the only people the state persecutes are class enemies and counter-revolutionaries. These are often referred to by the name of their leader, Metropolitan Sergius: the “**Sergianists**.”

[Note: Since the Communist regime collapsed in Russia, Sergianism *per se* has been mostly replaced with its ugly offspring **Neo-Sergianism**. The difference between the two is that under the Bolsheviks Christians were **forced** to submit to the state and declare their full union with it. Nowadays, the Neo-Sergianists do **voluntarily** submit themselves to the secular authorities to seek their

support (in the form of money, riot police making sure that they control all the main historical cathedrals, churches, monasteries, etc, and, most importantly, to bestow upon them the illusion of legitimacy. This is true not only in post-Communist countries, but also in the rest of the world. I discuss this issue in more details in my articles above. [“Why Orthodox Churches are still used as pawns in political games”](#), [“A negative view of Christianity and religion in general”](#) and [“The abomination of desolation standing in the holy place”](#)]

Finally, all those who were massacred or persecuted by the Bolsheviks are referred to as [“The New Martyrs and Confessor of Russia.”](#) (<https://www.amazon.com/Russian-Golgotha-Martyrs-Confessors-Russia/dp/0968634842>) This is an image of this icon of these new saints:



The stances taken by the three first groups are all equally pious options. The proof of that statement is that ***the first three groups all remained in communion with each other and rejected the communion with the Sergianist even when threatened with torture and death!*** The stance of the fourth group is, however, diametrically opposed to original, Patristic, theology. Let me give you one small example:

During the 3rd century AD the [Decian Prosecution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decian_persecution) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decian_persecution) demanded that “everyone in the Roman Empire” (except for Jews, who were exempted; in fact, they often egged on the Romans to persecute the Christians they hated so much) perform a sacrifice to the Roman gods and the well-being of the Emperor. The edict ordered that the sacrifices be performed in the presence of a Roman magistrate, and a signed and witnessed certificate be issued to that effect. Some Christians lapsed and agreed to perform the sacrifice. Others did not do that, but secured documents (called *libelli*) which certified that they had done so ([see here for a pretty decent summary](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09211a.htm) (http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09211a.htm) of this situation). Well, even the latter were considered “lapsed” by the Church and one of the Church’s most remarkable hierarchs: [Saint Cyprian of Carthage](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Cyprian_of_Carthage). (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Cyprian_of_Carthage) They were eventually re-united with the Church, but only after their public confession and condemnation of their actions!

Twenty-seven centuries later, the same truth was reaffirmed in the beautiful Service to the New Martyrs and Confessor of Russia written by His Eminence Archbishop Anthony (Medvedev) of San Francisco, who was the first ruling bishop of the Western American Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. He served as bishop of San Francisco for thirty two years. He was the last bishop of the Russian Church who was born and raised in pre-revolutionary Russia ([source](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Anthony_(Medvedev)_of_San_Francisco))

(https://orthodoxwiki.org/Anthony_(Medvedev)_of_San_Francisco). In one of the *stichera* of this service we can read:

“People do not save the Church, and collaboration with Her enemies yields no benefits, but it is the Church which saves people by the power of Christ, as your spiritual feat has shown. Oh steadfast New Martyrs of Russia, you who are truly the glory of the Church, fervently pray for Her that God may keep Her steadfast” (my own, rough, translation from Church Slavonic).

Keep in mind that the pagan Romans usually did NOT ask Christians to give up their faith. They “only” asked that the Christians “respect” the pagan gods. Yet that is clearly an apostasy, at least in the teachings and ethos of the Fathers.

The Bolsheviks, in contrast, demanded much more: not only did you have to commit a clear apostasy, they also wanted Christians to submit to an illegitimate (lapsed) bishop, they wanted Christians to prove their loyalty by denouncing others, they demanded that priests break the secrecy of confession and denounce true Christians to the Secret Police, etc. Compared to Lenin, Trotsky and their gang of Russophobic murderers, the Roman pagans were rather minimalists in their demand. Yet the Bolsheviks clearly demanded something which belongs to God (spiritual matters) and the Sergainists agreed to hand it over to their Bolshevik Caesars.

For an Orthodox Christian, there cannot be any obedience outside the obedience to God. For details, see my essay above “[Obedience in Christianity: a reply to an important question.](#)” Let me just clarify some terminology: when a Christian agreed to even sparkle a few charcoals on a pagan god’s fire, or just gets a piece of paper saying that he did that that already makes him a “lapsed” person. If a Christian joins an illegal (by canon law) bishop he becomes a “schismatic.” If he develops a theological justification for that lapse or schism he becomes a “heretic.” These words are not slurs or insults, at least not in the context of a theological discussion: they are *diagnostic* concepts.

The bottom line is this: ***there is no need whatsoever to reinvent any “theological wheel.”*** Truly, there is nothing new under the sun, and most definitely not persecutions and heresies. The latter have always existed in the past two thousand years. So when something happens, we don’t need to think long and hard about we or, worse, consider what modern theologian X has to say about it. All we need to do is see what Christ, the Apostles and the Fathers have always been saying about that. If we do that, intensively, we might shed the secular and scholastic mindset of our times and replace it with the “spirit of the Fathers.”

Yvonne Lorenzo: Although Andrei Martyanov, the Russian military analyst and historian is not a believer, he wrote this piece, “[A Dramatic And, Sadly, Expected Data](https://smoothiex12.blogspot.com/2019/06/a-dramatic-and-sadly-expected-data.html),” (https://smoothiex12.blogspot.com/2019/06/a-dramatic-and-sadly-expected-data.html) in which he discusses the increased suicide rate in the United States, its

highest since World War II. He writes, and with sympathy for the victims, since he lives and works in America:

The secret? How about I go out on a limb here and name three main causes:

Alienation due to lack of meaningful future, hence drugs, among other things;

Radical atomization;

Mental decline due to social media and degenerate art and culture.

*Here is [an] interesting fact: in Russian, mentally unstable people (and suicide often, not always, is a result of such instability) are still called, even in medical practice as **Душевнобольной** (Ill with soul, or sick soul), which, I think, is a good description. No amount of material possessions can make one happy unless one's life is filled with purpose and love. Some, revert to religion—this seldom helps, others—they do develop deep faith (I hope you understand why I separate these two: religion and faith). Some have faith in God, whatever God is for them, others have faith in inherent good, beauty and order which must prevail universally, others have faith in dream—but it is always faith. Even militant atheists have faith, however misguided it is sometimes. Life has to be filled with meaning, without it—no amount of material valuables will suffice.*

Looking at the modern West in general and US in particular today, one cannot fail to notice this increasing stench of nihilism and depravity which permeates the atmosphere—from mass media to human relations. Moreover, the future for many (in their view) doesn't look bright at all—it is one [showing] signs of a serious crisis in society. People lose [the] desire to live, they don't see the value in living—their souls die before physical death occurs.

As an Orthodox Christian, please explain “Душевнобольной” from your perspective, the causes and perhaps a solution, if there is any.

The Saker: Yet another very complex and interesting question requiring a lengthy reply. The good news is that this reply was already given, and by somebody eminently qualified: the late and the Most Reverend Chrysostomos, Metropolitan Emeritus of Etna, CA, who, amongst his [many academic titles and awards](http://hotca.org/news/miscellaneous/834-the-repose-of-the-most-reverend-chrysostomos-metropolitan-emeritus-of-etna) (http://hotca.org/news/miscellaneous/834-the-repose-of-the-most-reverend-chrysostomos-metropolitan-emeritus-of-etna) also completed an M.A. and PhD. in Psychology at Princeton

University, where he taught for three years as a Preceptor (assistant instructor) in the psychology department. He later went on from Princeton to accept a professorship at the University of California, Riverside. I highly recommend his book “[A Guide to Orthodox Psychotherapy: The Science, Theology, and Spiritual Practice Behind It and Its Clinical Applications.](https://www.amazon.com/Guide-Orthodox-Psychotherapy-Spiritual-Applications/dp/0761836020)” (https://www.amazon.com/Guide-Orthodox-Psychotherapy-Spiritual-Applications/dp/0761836020) Another interesting couple of books are “[The Theology of Illness](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0881412392/)” (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0881412392/) and “[Mental Disorders & Spiritual Healing: Teachings from the Early Christian East](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/159731045X/)” (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/159731045X/) by Jean-Claude Larchet.

All I will say here is that the notion of completely separate body, mind and soul is not a Patristic one. Yes, the Fathers use these categories, just like they used ancient Greek philosophical categories, but they always re-defined/re-interpreted them; thus you cannot just snatch some quote from Saint X and Saint Z and say that, indeed, body, mind and soul are completely separated. In fact, the original vocabulary of the Platonists and has been deeply re-worked and transformed in the Patristic context. This is why it is also so silly to declare that Church Father X or Y are “Neo-Platonists”: yes, the words they use are the same, but their *meanings* have been profoundly reworked.

To truly understand disease and its role in our lives you need to familiarize yourself with the basics of Patristic dogmatic anthropology.

I am sorry, but this is the best answer I can give without going into a lecture.

Yvonne Lorenzo: Regarding satanists, I’ve read how when doing evil something demonic takes place; if we can trust a repentant satanist murderer, his testimony was that in killing he felt united to what I’d call demonic or the devil, another consciousness and felt power, not just what you said about “forbidden fruit”, that is to say there is an alternated consciousness and receiving of the demonic. Given what Orthodoxy states about the nature of man being changed after the “fall” what are your thoughts?

The Saker: My thoughts on that is this: God is merciful and “*He does not want the death of the sinner*“, right?

So while satanists will try to kill, defile and destroy everything, God restrains them and only allows the suffering which we can bear and which we need for our own spiritual growth. Yes, the End Times are inevitable, but our resistance to Evil and our prayers can delay that, maybe by many, many years. So maybe mankind will fry in a nuclear holocaust very soon and maybe not; maybe through the intercession of the Mother of God and the saints, he will allow us to live in relative peace for a while. It is all in His will.

I want to add the following: there is NO sin, NO crime, NO evil deed which would truly irrevocably separate you from God. Many of the greatest saints in history began their lives in terrible sins, including one of my most revered saints, Saint Mary of Egypt whose life you can read [here](https://thesaker.is/the-life-of-our-holy-mother-mary-of-egypt/) (https://thesaker.is/the-life-of-our-holy-mother-mary-of-egypt/) (I *highly* recommend this text!). Furthermore, we know from the Psalter that “*Sacrifice to God is a broken spirit: a broken and humbled heart God will not despise*” (Ps. 50:17 LXX). Thus any and all truly repentant sinner will be forgiven and, if they ask to be reunited with the Church, they will be accepted. Finally, while there are sins which would prevent a person from joining the clergy, even the worst of sinners can become a monastic since, by definition, a monastic is somebody who repents and seeks to emulate the existence of the angels.

Yvonne Lorenzo: What does it mean to be Christian, that is to follow the Way of Jesus Christ?

The Saker: Well, in modern parlance, anybody calling himself a Christian is a Christian. Fair enough for our post-Christian society. But originally, a Christian was a person who a) had a Patristic understanding criterion of truth and b) who was united with the Church. Let's take them one by one.

What is the Patristic criterion of truth? It is well summarized in the following three quotes:

The faith “*which the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers. On this was the Church founded; and if anyone departs from this, he neither is nor any longer ought to be called a Christian*” (St. Athanasius)

and (literally, as an addition, in the sense of the mathematical sign “plus”)

That “*which has been believed everywhere, always and by all*” (St. Vicent of Lerins).

and (literally, as an addition, in the sense of the mathematical sign “plus”)

“As the Prophets saw, as the Apostles taught, as the Church has received, as the teachers expressed in dogmas, as the whole world has agreed, as the grace has illuminated” (Synodikon of Orthodoxy)

The first quote explains that every truly Christian teaching has to be “upward-compatible” with what was taught by Christ, the Apostles and the Fathers.

The second quote explains that every truly Christian teaching has to be “upward-compatible” with that which was accepted by all Orthodox Christians (geographical criterion: all over the world, in all the regions, by all local Orthodox Churches) and by everybody (personal criterion: truly by everybody, not just clergy, even the laity).

The third quote adds a crucial criterion: *the truth is received through illumination*, not scholastic theorizing.

Furthermore, unity in the original Christian ecclesiology is not achieved by overlooking differences, finding commonalities or by simply communing from the same Cup with no regards to “obscure theological topics” (to use a modern expression). For us, **FIRST** comes the unity in faith (*doxa*) and practices, only **AFTER** than can the unity at the Cup of our Lord be fully celebrated.

In Western denominations, it is the polar opposite: all of them are poisoned by scholasticism and all of them place the so-called “inter-communion” before of a real unity of faith.

I want to add something extremely important here: there is one more meaning of the word “Christian”: that is a person who, while not united to the Church, seeks with all his might to live according to the precept of Christ and His Apostles. These are people who know almost nothing about the original, One Church of Christ, who often have completely erroneous ideas about what the Church really is or what Christ really taught, but by no fault of their own. By the way, such righteous people can be found in all religions. I would like to share with you a recent example of such true Christian love and desire to truly follow Christ and His teaching in the following video which shows the brother of a murdered victim forgive and even declare his (Christian) love for the women who pulled the trigger. See for yourself and, while watching, ask yourself what Christ would have to say to this young man:

So, okay, this man is not a traditionalist Orthodox Christian, but he sure puts a lot of us, including myself, to shame!

While theology is important, even crucial (a sick person needs to *correct* medicine!), Christ did not ask us to become theologians, instead, He said:

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. (Matt: 25:34-46)

These are frightening words for those Orthodox Christians who mistake the holiness and perfection of the Church with their own and whose hearts are sometimes much harder than the hearts of righteous non-Orthodox people.

Finally, even theology, the real thing, not the scholastic substitute invented in the West, is inseparable from true love and righteousness. Do you know what the original Church considered to be a real theologian? The answer can be found in the Beatitudes: “Blessed are the **pure in heart**: for they **shall see God**” (Matt 5:8).

From the original Christian point of view, sinning is NOT about “angering” or “offending” God. Sinning simply means “missing the target”, “not realizing your full

potential” to use a modern expression. We know that God “*Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness*” (Gen 1:26). The “image” here means that we were created with the potential to become perfect, Christ-like. The word “likeness” refers to our actual condition. When we sin, we keep that potential, that image, but we lose our likeness. Thus, when we sin, we only hurt ourselves and others, never God. Most importantly, when we sin we darken our inner “heart” and that makes it impossible for us to realize our full potential or even to have a correct perception of vital spiritual issues.

The Fathers were superb theologians, that is true, some of them were amongst the most brilliant theologians and philosophers which ever lived (I think of Saint Maximos the Confessor or Saint Gregory Palamas). Yet, first and foremost they were SAINTS!

This is why modern (pseudo-)theology is so vapid, arrogant and, frankly, ridiculous: it is almost always the product of maybe well-intended, but completely clueless people. Of sure, they got their PhDs in “divinity studies”, but their hearts are clouded by sin and heresy, and they truly like the citizens Nineveh: they can’t tell their right and left hands apart (Jonah 4:11)!

True theology comes from a clean heart and from the illumination which a person which such a heart receives, not from original, novel or otherwise book-selling intellectual speculations. As one of my priest friend likes to say “the Fathers were not sipping cognac or smoking cigars while theologizing: they were praying, especially the [Jesus Prayer](#), (http://archangelsbooks.com/articles/spirituality/JesusPrayer_Brianchaninov.asp) and they were humbly repenting for their sins” (even if they had very few, in fact, the less sins a person carries, the more he/she becomes of them).

True Christianity was always found first and foremost in monasteries, not secular learning institutions, and this is still true today.

By the way, you said, “I’ve also read [Surprised by Christ: My Journey From Judaism to Orthodox Christianity](#) by Rev. James A. Bernstein (<https://www.amazon.com/Surprised-Christ-Journey-Orthodox-Christianity/dp/1888212950>) who discussed these matters from an Orthodox perspective.” I have not read this book, but I HIGHLY recommend this short essay of his: [Which Came First: The Church or the New Testament?](#)

(<http://orthodoxinfo.com/inquirers/whichcamefirst.aspx>)

Yvonne Lorenzo: Finally, a question regarding Russian history. With such a strong Orthodox heritage, who was responsible for the murder of Christians in the Russian revolution and also for the Gulags?

The Saker: Short answer: mostly Bolshevik Jews, at least until Stalin's purges of the Party.

Longer answer: yes, originally, most top commanders of the Soviet Secret Police (called ChK) were Jews. But a lot of the rank and file came from other nationalities. I don't think that Bolsheviks had a national consciousness. In that they were just like transnational capitalists. Sure, the first generation of Bolshevik Jews did have a specific identity, but in most cases their ideology *was not specifically Jewish*. All they inherited from the Rabbis was their sense of racial superiority and rabid hatred for everything Christian, especially Orthodox Christians. But beyond that, they were more secular Marxists than Talmudist. On the issue of why such an orgy of evil took place after the 1917 Revolution I want to quote Alexander Solzhenitsyn: ([source](#)) (<http://orthochristian.com/47643.html>)

In the 18th, the country was shaken by Peter's forcibly imposed transformations, which favored the economy, the state, and the military at the expense of the religious spirit and national life. And along with this lopsided Petrine enlightenment, Russia felt the first whiff of secularism; its subtle poisons permeated the educated classes in the course of the 19th century and opened the path to Marxism. By the time of the Revolution, faith had virtually disappeared in Russian educated circles; and amongst the uneducated, its health was threatened.

Imperceptibly, through decades of gradual erosion, the meaning of life in the West has ceased to be seen as anything more lofty than the "pursuit of happiness, "a goal that has even been solemnly guaranteed by constitutions. The concepts of good and evil have been ridiculed for several centuries; banished from common use, they have been replaced by political or class considerations of short lived value. It has become embarrassing to state that evil makes its home in the individual human heart before it enters a political system. Yet it is not considered shameful to make dally concessions to an integral evil (...). Western societies are losing more and more of their religious essence as they

thoughtlessly yield up their younger generation to atheism (...) When external rights are completely unrestricted, why should one make an inner effort to restrain oneself from ignoble acts? Or why should one refrain from burning hatred, whatever its basis—race, class, or ideology? Such hatred is in fact corroding many hearts today. Atheist teachers in the West are bringing up a younger generation in a spirit of hatred of their own society. Amid all the vituperation we forget that the defects of capitalism represent the basic flaws of human nature, allowed unlimited freedom together with the various human rights; we forget that under Communism (...) the identical flaws run riot in any person with the least degree of authority; while everyone else under that system does indeed attain “equality”—the equality of destitute slaves. This eager fanning of the flames of hatred is becoming the mark of today’s free world. Indeed, the broader the personal freedoms are, the higher the level of prosperity or even of abundance—the more vehement, paradoxically, does this blind hatred become. The contemporary developed West thus demonstrates by its own example that human salvation can be found neither in the profusion of material goods nor in merely making money (...). We must first recognize the horror perpetrated not by some outside force, not by class or national enemies, but within each of us individually, and within every society. This is especially true of a free and highly developed society, for here in particular we have surely brought everything upon ourselves, of our own free will. We ourselves, in our daily unthinking selfishness, are pulling tight that noose...

This is all very important, every word.

The theological answer with three scriptural quotations:

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph. 6:12),

“My name is Legion: for we are many.” (Mark 5:9)

And “Trust not in princes, nor in the children of men, in whom there is no safety. His breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth; in that day all his thoughts shall perish.” (Psalm 145:3-4 according to the LXX).

It is not about “groups” (races, classes, denominations, etc.) *it is always, always, a struggle against demonic powers*, irrespective of what ideology or leader the demons will use for their own purposes.

This was true 2000 years ago, and it is still true today.

I would like to add one more thing: I have tried to answer your questions as best I can, but if in any of my replies I have erred from the Truth, I repent for it and ask for forgiveness.

Yvonne Lorenzo makes her home in New England in a house full to bursting with books, including works on classical Greece and theological works. Her interests include gardening, mythology, ancient history, The Electric Universe, and classical music, especially the compositions of Handel, Mozart, Bach, Haydn, Tchaikovsky, Wagner, Mahler, and the Bel Canto repertoire. She is the author [Son of Thunder](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01F4GMGTM) (https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01F4GMGTM) and [The Cloak of Freya](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01K9BDFN8). (https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01K9BDFN8)

The Second Psalm in four translations:

Note that the Septuagint translations clearly reference “The Christ” or “The Anointed” and “My Son.”

[New International Version © Biblica](https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/psalm/2/)

<https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/psalm/2/>

- 1 *Why do the nations conspire[a] and the peoples plot in vain?*
- 2 *The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying,*
- 3 *“Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.”*
- 4 *The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.*
- 5 *He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,*
- 6 *“I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.”*
- 7 *I will proclaim the Lord’s decree: He said to me, “You are my son; today I have become your father.*

8 Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.

9 You will break them with a rod of iron[b]; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.”

10 Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling.

12 Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Footnotes:

[a] Psalm 2:1 Hebrew; Septuagint rage

[b] Psalm 2:9 Or will rule them with an iron scepter (see Septuagint and Syriac)

King James Translation:

<https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Psalms-Chapter-2/>

1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Septuagint translation by Sir Lancelot C.L. Bretton:

<https://ebible.org/eng-Brenton/PSA002.htm>

- 1 *Wherefore did the heathen rage, and the nations imagine vain things?*
- 2 *The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers gathered themselves together, against the Lord, and against his **Christ**; (emphasis added)*
- 3 *saying, Let us break through their bonds, and cast away their yoke from us.*
- 4 *He that dwells in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall mock them.*
- 5 *Then shall he speak to them in his anger, and trouble them in his fury.*
- 6 *But I have been made king by him on Sion his holy mountain,*
- 7 *declaring the ordinance of the Lord: the Lord said to me, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.*
- 8 *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession.*
- 9 *Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel.*
- 10 *Now therefore understand, ye kings: be instructed, all ye that judge the earth.*
- 11 *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in him with trembling.*
- 12 *Accept correction, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye should perish from the righteous way: whensoever his wrath shall be suddenly kindled, blessed are all they that trust in him.*

N.E.T.S. Translation (<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/24-ps-nets.pdf>) taken from [A New English Translation of the Septuagint](#) © 2007 by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc. Used by permission of Oxford University Press, all rights reserved. (<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/>)

Psalm 2

- 1 *Why did nations grow insolent, and peoples contemplate vain things?*
- 2 *The kings of the earth stood side by side, and the rulers gathered together, against the Lord and against his **anointed**,*
- 3 *“Let us burst their bonds asunder and cast their yoke from us.”*
- 4 *He who resides in the heavens will laugh at them, and the Lord will mock them.*
- 5 *Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and in his anger he will trouble them.*
- 6 *“But I was established king by him, on Sion, his holy mountain,*

7 by proclaiming the Lord's ordinance: The Lord said to me, 'My son you are;
today I have begotten you. [Emphasis added]

8 Ask of me, and I will give you nations as your heritage, and as your possession
the ends of the

9 earth. You shall shepherd them with an iron rod; like a potter's vessel you will
shatter them.'

10 And now, O kings, be sensible; be instructed, all you who judge the earth.

11 Be subject to the Lord with fear, and rejoice in him with trembling.

12 Seize upon instruction, lest the Lord be angry, and you will perish from the
righteous way, when his anger quickly blazes out. Happy are all who trust in him.

LINKS IN THE ARTICLE:

<https://www.amazon.com/Incarnation-Saint-Athanasius-Popular-Patristics/dp/0881414271>

<https://www.amazon.com/Orthodox-Way-Kallistos/dp/0881416282/>

<https://www.amazon.com/Orthodox-Dogmatic-Theology-Michael-Pomazansky-ebook/dp/B00Q54OEB6>

<https://www.amazon.com/Surprised-Christ-Journey-Orthodox-Christianity/dp/1888212950>

<https://www.amazon.com/Moody-Bible-Commentary-Michael-Rydelnik-ebook/dp/B00DZEYP7W>

<https://www.amazon.com/Bells-Dawn-Russian-Sacred-Folk-Songs/dp/B00M15FN54?SubscriptionId=AKIAI63WS3YGA3Y5U2QA&tag=lrc18->

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An Insight Into Orthodox Christianity: Interview With The Saker

July 01, 2015



by [Katherine Frisk](#) for [the International reporter](#)

Just over a year ago I had little to no understanding of Orthodox Christianity, the Russian Orthodox Church, its history or how it differed from the West. It was largely due to the war in Ukraine that I wanted to get a deeper understanding of the people of Eastern Ukraine and what motivated them. After watching numerous reports from the region I came to realise that although the Soviet Union which included Ukraine had gone through a period of total atheism, since its fall after almost 80 years, there had been a major resurgence in Christianity and in Orthodox Christianity in particular. Western perception even after 25 years still regards Eastern Europe and Russia as atheist states when nothing could be further from the truth.

Ukraine as a country is not only divided by language, Russian spoken in the east and Ukrainian spoken in the west, it is also divided by fundamental religious values and beliefs that extend back into the past for well on 1,000 years. But for the purposes of this interview, I did not want to look at Ukraine in an historical context which you can read at:

Ukrainian nationalism – its roots and nature

I wanted to understand the essential beliefs of Orthodox Christianity, how it differs from western Christianity and why these differences should cause such acrimony and conflict generation after generation, from the fall of the Byzantine Empire and the destruction of Constantinople, the Inquisition, Napoleon, World War 1, the communist Bolshevik Revolution, World War 2 and now the current situation in Ukraine. The Saker who has been generously sharing information about the situation in Eastern Ukraine on his web site [The Saker.is](http://TheSaker.is), was kind enough to take the time to answer these questions.

Q: Briefly, can you please explain the fundamental principles of Orthodox Christianity.

THE SAKER: The simplest way to explain what Orthodoxy is to say that it is the original Christian religion. A great Orthodox saint called Athanasios (4th century) said that Orthodoxy is the faith “which the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers. On this was the Church founded; and if anyone departs from this, he neither is nor any longer ought to be called a Christian.” Another famous saint, Vincent of Lérins (5th century), also wrote that on that “which has been believed everywhere, always and by all can be considered truly Orthodox.” In other words, to be considered Orthodox a teaching has to be one which Christians have believed in all parts of the world, at all times (i.e. from the times of Christ and until today) and by truly all Christians (not the personal opinion of this or that bishop, saint, Patriarch or group of people). Any doctrine, teaching or dogma which does not pass these “tests of Orthodoxy” is to be considered as an innovation and rejected as a heresy (the word “heresy” is not an insult, it just means “different choice.”)

Orthodoxy has numerous superficial similarities to western Christian denominations such as the Papacy, the Anglican church or the Episcopalians, but as soon as you dig just below the surface you immediately realize that both in terms of faith and daily life western Christianity has essentially become a new, separate, religion with very little meaningful connection to the original Christianity of the first centuries. This is very sad as Europe used to be Orthodox for roughly 1000 years before the Papacy decided that it would rule over the entire planet and demand that all people accept the hegemony of the Pope.

In the original Christian Church, and in Orthodoxy today, the notion of “unity” is very different from the one of the Papacy. The Papacy is a single organization, run by

one putatively infallible “super-bishop” the submission to whom is seen as the criterion of unity. In contrast, the Orthodoxy Church has no central power, it is a fully de-centralized entity which understands unity not in a bureaucratic/administrative sense, but as the result of having the same faith. Having the same faith, in turn, leads to a visible sign of unity: receiving the Eucharist from the same cup.

Spiritually and culturally, the Orthodox Church is much closer to certain form of Islam (Sufism) and Hinduism (Dvaita Vedanta) than to western Christianity. Nowadays the western society cannot be described as Christian any more, it is post-Christian at best, but if we look at the history of western Christianity we see that it tends to be speculative and scholastic. In contrast, Orthodoxy is much more mystical and ascetic.

The 20th century has been terrible for the Orthodox world. Not only did many millions of Orthodox Christians die at the hands of the Communists, but many autonomous local churches were infiltrated by secret agents of influence (for the Bolshevik state in Russia and by Freemasons in Greece). As a result, a new pseudo-Orthodoxy has appeared which I like to describe as a “Eastern Rite Protestantism”: it is externally similar to the real Orthodoxy, but its ethos and practices put these modernist denominations much closer to modern version of western Christianity than to the traditionalist Orthodox world or to the original Christian Church.

Q: What does direct knowledge of God mean to you from an Orthodox Christian perspective. In other words, Popes come and go, people come and go, but direct knowledge is everlasting.

THE SAKER: In contrast to the western speculative and scholastic theology, Orthodoxy takes literally the words of Christ Who said: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” We do believe that the way to achieve such a purity of heart it to engage in a life-long praxis of asceticism (fasting, prayer, holding vigils, standing, etc.) and of full immersion into the multi-dimensional spiritual struggle against the spiritual, mental and physiological pathologies resulting from our fallen nature. To put it simply: we do not believe that the Church is a club for saints, but rather we believe it to be a hospital for sinners in which the “doctors” “prescribe” a spiritually profitable “medicine” to the patients. Mind you – we do not seek to mortify or otherwise suppress our human nature or flesh, but we seek to sublimate them by re-directing our natural impulses towards the correct goal. The word “sin” in Greek means “missing the target.” So when we sin, we do not anger some vindictive old man sitting on a cloud,

but we fail to fully realize our real spiritual potential. Thus our ascetic practices are not motivated by a rejection or hatred of our flesh, but rather they are aimed at recovering the full potential of our true human nature.

While all Orthodox Christians are engaged in this daily spiritual struggle, only some have fully achieved the goal of actually “seeing” God. Let me immediately say there that really “seeing” God is absolutely impossible, God being infinitely transcendent and, if you wish, “different” from us in His nature, what we can see are His “uncreated energies.” This is a very complex topic which has baffled western theologians, so I will grossly over-simplify it by saying that we cannot see God Himself, but we can see what He “radiates.” This is what the Apostles witnessed on Mount Tabor and what the Prophets of the Old Testament saw. But to be able to receive such a vision, a person has to begin by acquiring the “spirit of the Fathers,” to renounce the modern world and seek to “obtain the Holy Spirit” (this experience is vividly described in the famous “conversation of [St. Seraphim of Sarov with Nicholas Motovilov.](#)“)

(<http://orthodoxinfo.com/praxis/wonderful.aspx>)

Finally, we do not believe that God has ever “left” us (and thus, we don’t see the need for a Vicar of Christ!) Not only did Christ explicitly tell us “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” but he also said that “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you (...) the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” We believe that the Church is not a worldly “organization” or “administration,” but we believe it to be literally the Body of Christ filled with the Holy Spirit. Thus in the Church we all are directly exposed to the sight of God, albeit in the two persons of the Trinity which He has chosen to show to us: Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Q: What role does the Book Of Revelation play in the Orthodox Church?

THE SAKER: The book of Revelation was added to the canon of the New Testament only relatively late and with a great deal of controversy. This is the only book which is not read at Orthodox Church services. While we do not believe in banning books or dividing the Church into a “teaching Church” and a “taught Church”

– we do realize the absolutely unique potential this book has for mis-interpretation. Thus, while it is both read and studied by Orthodox Christians, it is usually done in close conjunction with the study authoritative patristic interpretations. This is also how we study the Old Testament, especially the book of Psalms of King David. Still, in my personal experience most Orthodox Christians are well versed in this book and often discuss what this or that symbol might mean, especially in the context of our modern times.

Q: Do you think that this Orthodox perception has had any impact on the way Putin and the current Russian government have conducted themselves in recent years? And that unlike the west which seems driven towards some kind of Armageddon like scenario, Russian perception differs entirely?

THE SAKER: Formally, Russia is a democracy. Contrary to the western propaganda, elections in Russia have been open and fair (at least since Putin, under Eltsin they were not), you have a multi-party system and the freedom of speech and the press is free. In reality, however, Russia is much more similar to Japan where under a formally democratic system a much more traditional system thrives. In Russia the real center of power is Putin himself and his real power base is in the people. You could argue that in this sense Russia is neo-monarchical. Now the system of government before the 1917 Revolution was directly inherited from the Roman Orthodox monarchy of Constantinople/Byzantium. While Orthodoxy is a-political, it is also clear that Orthodox Christians consider a monarchy as the ideal system of government even if it is no always possible to have one. In Orthodox tradition the monarchy and the Church live in a “symphony of power”, one ruling the country and the other in charge of the spiritual realm. Currently, I would argue that the moral authority of Vladimir Putin is way bigger than his legal authority and thus that Russia now has a ruler whose power is based on authority rather than a ruler whose authority is based on power. That is neo-monarchical if you want, and most definitely traditional for Russia.

The other aspect of Orthodox ethos which is present today in Russia is the strong support of a “social state” i.e.: a state of social solidarity, where the common good is the highest ideal and social justice an ideal supported by most of the people.

De facto Russia has a capitalist market economy but the social ideal is definitely not the capitalist model. The notion that the sum of all the individual greeds results in the

best possible system (a typically capitalist assumption) is not compatible with the Russian culture, even if this is still largely the reality of the Russian society. Here again Russia is much closer culturally to her Asian neighbors than to the capitalist West.

When I say that the book of Revelation was adopted “late” I speak as an Orthodox. It was in the 5th century. For us this is “late.” But that is still half a millennium before the birth of the Papacy :-)

And yes, we do believe that there will be an “end times,” many believe that this will happen pretty soon too. However, we also believe that we can delay the events described symbolically in the Revelation by prayer, asceticism and by our struggle against evil. The sequence of events outlined in the book of Revelation cannot be changed or stopped, but it can be delayed!

In our lives we are supposed to imitate Christ who was crucified on the Golgotha – that means that we accept that being killed by others for our faith is a real possibility, be it in a direct persecution by the worldly powers or by a long distance nuclear weapon. And while we all want to live and we are not allowed to seek martyrdom, we are also taught to be prepared for it and accept it if this day comes. We live by the words of Christ who said “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Thus our struggle remains primarily a spiritual one.

To find out more about Orthodox Christianity, Ukraine and Russia, please go to [The Saker.is](http://TheSaker.is)

Putin, the Pope, the Schism, Franks and Romans

June 11, 2015



So the Pope met with Putin. And the media (corporate and free) is full of all sorts of opinions, analyses, interpretations, etc. Frankly, I have no interest in commenting either on the visit (though I have an opinion about it, of course) or, even less, on the mostly sophomoric and ill-informed about it. What I propose to do is to expose you to a dramatically different point of view to the one you are typically exposed to. So let's go on that trip into the "far elsewhere":

Today's so-called "Christian world" includes several "branches" or "denominations" of Christianity who differ from each other in dogma, rite, traditions, culture, history etc. Contrary to what a lot of people like to declare, these differences are far from trivial, especially the dogmatic ones. In fact, they are huge. To the point that the the only politically correct meaning of the word "Christian" is "*anybody who claims to believe in Christ, whatever that means*". Kinda vague, no?

That ambiguity or opacity is quite deliberate. The ideology *en vogue* now demands that we all nod our heads in agreement when we hear the cliché about "irrelevant and obscure points of fine theology". Fine. Though I totally disagree with that, I won't argue about this today (maybe some other day). Today I want to look into something different: the collective/corporate memory of some, but not all, Orthodox Churches.

Most modern Christian Churches have a very short collective memory, a century or so, max. Even the Latin Christians who claim to be “The Church” usually have no idea about Vatican I, nevermind the Middle-Ages or Antiquity. Most Orthodox Christians, who also claim to be “The Church”, don’t fare much better. Most Russians will have some pretty good notions about the history of the Russian Orthodox Church, most Greeks about Greek Orthodoxy, most Serbs about Serbian saints, etc. In fact, the sad reality is that most so-called “Orthodox” Churches are no less cut-off from the roots of Christianity than their Protestant or Latin counterparts. To make things worse, most “mainstream” or “official” Orthodox Churches participate in the so-called “Ecumenical dialog of love” with the other Christians, and sometimes even non-Christian, denominations/religions out there. As a result, if you just walk or drive to the nearest putatively “Orthodox” church nearby you are most likely to find a parish very similar to any Latin or Protestant parish, with a “Father Bob” in charge, and maybe some exotic singing or rituals, but very little difference in *ethos*. The folks attending that church will be just like their non-Orthodox counterparts: trying to live by Christians ethics, generally respectful of what they think are “Orthodox traditions” (which in some case are less than a century old!) and often very focused on their national/ethnic identity. One term to describe this kind of “Orthodoxy” is “world Orthodoxy”. This designation fits not only because this kind of “Orthodoxy is very worldly”, but also because it is accepted, endorsed and even protected by secular world powers which have correctly identified that this kind of “Orthodoxy” presents no threat to their rule.

But there is another Orthodoxy still out there. Much smaller, much poorer, recognized by nobody (at least in this world), completely marginalized and often ostracized. I call it “Traditional Orthodoxy” or “Patristic Orthodoxy”.

This is the Orthodoxy whose cultural and historical roots go directly into the first centuries, whose idea of what is Christian and what is not, is the same one as the one of the Church Fathers of the first 10 centuries of Christian history and whose daily life (the *ortho-praxis*) tries as hard a possible to emulate the one of the early Christians. There are numerous differences between this “Traditional Orthodoxy” and “World Orthodoxy” of “Father Bob”, and I won’t go into them right now. But one such difference is the collective/corporate memory of these ancient Christians. Today I want to share with you one such aspect: the understanding and interpretation of the so-called “Schism of 1054” by traditional Orthodox Christians.

Since the Pope and Putin have met, there will be a lot of (totally vapid) discussion of the Schism, of how to “reconcile” “East and West” and all that kind of nonsense. So I think that it is important for you, my readers, to know why this is all rubbish and how genuine Orthodox Christians view this topic.

First, I want to share with you a video produced by the [Greek Orthodox Christian Youtube Channel](#), a channel organized by members of the [Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians in America](#), which is a part of the [Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece](#). This Church is one of the four traditionalist Orthodox Churches who united most, but not all, traditionalist Orthodox Christians worldwide (the other three are the [Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Romania](#), the [Russian Orthodox Church Abroad](#) and the [Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Bulgaria](#)).

This is a series of nine short videos entitled “[Franks and Romans](#)“. To make the viewing easier, I have collated all these short videos into one which I am now posting below.

The panel discussion, lead by Father Christodulos, centers on the book “*Franks, Romans, Feudalism, and Doctrine*” by [Fr. John Romanides](#). I have made this book – along with another of his books, “*Introduction to Romanity, Romania, Roumeli*” – available for download here:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1NvJMqDM9JKRNibJ1xd6yDyEDwKqnaozP>

This is one zipped file which contains both of these books by Father John in three formats: PDF, DOCX, ODT and FB2 along with several videos on the topic of “sickness of religion”.

Here is the video itself:



<https://youtu.be/SvEX15vd82w>

You might think that reading a book (or two) and watching a 80min long video is too much work, but that this really the minimum to give you even a first indication of how different the worldview and collective memory of “Traditional Orthodox Christians” is from the mainstream “Christianity” you see everyday, including from the representatives of “World Orthodoxy”. In fact, if you go to your local “official” Orthodox parish and ask “Father Bob” what he thinks of the views presented here, he will either denounce them as “zealotry” or, most likely, he will tell you that he never has heard of them. And yet, things are not quite so simple.

Above I said that Traditional Orthodoxy forms a small subset of the much bigger Orthodox world out there. This is true, and it is also not true. The reality is that inside the “official” Orthodox Churches you will find a lot of people who are spiritually much closer to their traditionalist brothers than to their modernist clergy. Not only that, but even inside the clergy of the “official” Orthodox Churches you will sometimes encounter clergymen who have remained personally very close to ancient Orthodoxy. The best example is Father John Romanides who not only was part of the (very “wordily”) Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and the (“official”) Church of Greece. He was even a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. Hardly the typical bio of a traditionalist, to say the least!

The reality is that the border between “world” and “traditional” Orthodoxy can be very porous and that while the “visible” traditionalists are a small minority in the Orthodox world, there are a lot of traditionalists inside the “official” Orthodox

Churches too. Not only that, but the presence of a highly educated and motivated traditionalist minority forces the (often modernist) majority clergymen to “look over their shoulder” and be very careful of what they say or do lest they be accused of apostasy.

Which brings me (finally!) to Putin and the Pope.

Putin and the Pope can meet as much as they want, and the Pope can also meet with Patriarch Kirill, the current head of the “official” Russian Orthodox Church. This is nothing new, similar meetings have happened many times in the past, and not only with Russians, but also with Greek and other Orthodox bishops and Patriarchs. In 1993 some Latin and Orthodox clergymen signed what can only be considered a “union”, the so-called “[Balamand Declaration](#)“. Heck, in the 15th century, Latin or Orthodox bishops even signed an official union between the two Churches, this was the so-called “[False Union of Florence](#)“. Only one Orthodox delegate, [Saint Mark of Ephesus](#), refused to sign. And yet even this project rapidly collapsed. Why?

Because the reality is that in matters of faith, Orthodox bishops do not have the exclusive responsibility of maintaining the “*which the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers. On this was the Church founded; and if anyone departs from this, he neither is nor any longer ought to be called a Christian*” (St. Athanasius). This is the personal responsibility of each Orthodox Christian, including laypeople, women and even children! To use an image borrowed from Iran, each Orthodox Christian is a “guardian of the faith”. And on many occasions in the history of the Church it was a small minority, or even one single person (like Saint Mark of Ephesus or Saint Maximos the Confessor) who upheld the truth.

Sure, there will be apostate and lapsed bishop (the history of the Church is full of them), and the big leaders will be corrupted and bought. From that point of view, the situation in Orthodoxy is very similar to the one in Islam, where a lot of so-called “leaders” are corrupt and have been long paid for, but where the masses, the flock, remains incorruptible even when the “elites” are. So it is possible that most (or even all) of the “official” Orthodox Churches will one day sign some kind of “surrender” document in which they will basically trade their Roman heritage for a neo-Frankish one, but even that is rather unlikely. Usually, as soon as the modernists try to pull off some ugly deed behind the back (or over the head – pick your metaphor) of their flock, it ends up with a revolt of the “base” against the rulers, which is exactly what happened in 1923 when some Orthodox Churches decided to switch to the Papal

Calendar (aka “Gregorian Calendar”). I very much doubt that the current “official” Russian Orthodox Church (the “Moscow Patriarchate”) would accept any kind of union with Rome, but if that happens I can absolutely guarantee that a huge backlash from many, and even maybe most, of the bishops, priests and laymen. So it is really simple: since the people will never accept a union with Rome what their “leaders” do matters very little. And if the Russians don’t go there, then it is most unlikely that he others will dare to go at it alone.

In the case of Putin, I have no doubt that his meeting with the Pope has nothing to do with any plans for a “union”, but since that “union” is discussed every time a senior Russian politician or clergymen meets the Pope, I figured I might as well explain here why it ain’t happening.

If you take the time to watch the video above or, better, read Romanides’ books, you will immediately see why all this empty talk about “reconciliation” is not only devoid of any substance, as it *totally misses the point* of what really separates today’s East and West and which was yesterday’s North and South:

The “West”, the so-called “Western civilization” has absolutely nothing to do, no connection whatsoever with ancient Rome or, even less so, ancient Greece. “Our” modern civilization does in no way originate in ancient Greece. Modern Europe, the “West” is a product of the Frankish civilization and modern Western Europe it was built on the ruins and blood of the Roman civilization. It took the Franks *centuries* to fully root-out the (Orthodox) Roman civilizations of southern Europe and to substitute themselves as the “new Romans”. In contrast, Russia is still today the direct heir to the Roman civilization and while Orthodoxy is weak in Russia, especially traditional Orthodoxy, it is already powerful enough to make any attempts at submitting Russia to the neo-Frankish world absolutely futile. So all these Latin dreams about “dedicating Russian to the Virgin Mary” and all the other ways to subjugating Russia to the Pope (which is, of course, the real objective here) have absolutely zero chance to succeed, at least long as a sufficient part of the Russian Orthodox people (not just clergy!) keep their traditional “collective/corporate” memory about the true history of the Church of Christ and the roots of Russian Orthodoxy.

In conclusion, I want to tell you that I have no intention of entering into any polemics with those who will be outraged by what I wrote above. I realize that what I wrote is in direct contradiction with what most of us have been told since our

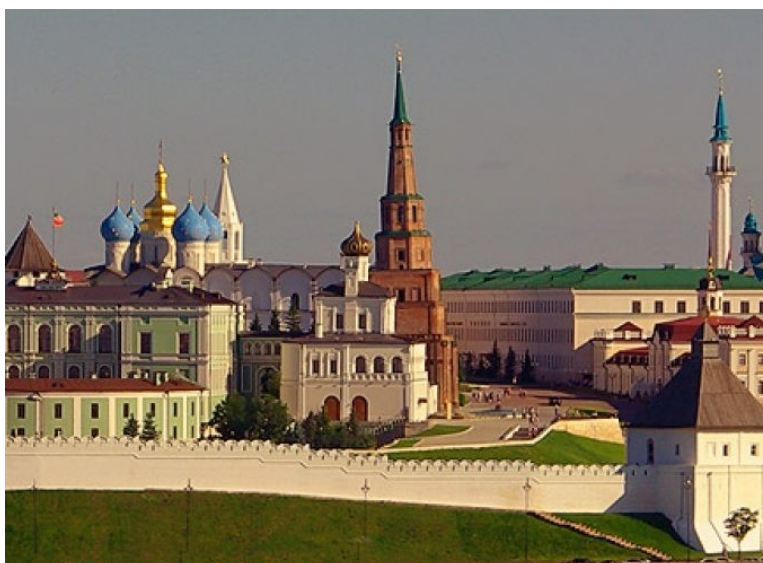
childhood. That is why I said that today I wanted to take you to a trip into the “far elsewhere”. That “far elsewhere” is, quite literally, “not of this world” and this is why Saint Paul wrote that “*worldly wisdom is foolishness to God*“. My sole purpose is to share with you what was handed down to me because I strongly believe that it is highly relevant for a true understanding of modern Russia. While I am offering to share with you a point of view admittedly very different from the one of the mainstream, I am not trying to make converts or sell anything. I want to give you the tools which I believe are crucial to the understanding why this constant talk about some kind of “reconciliation” is nonsensical, but if you prefer the mainstream version, by all means – ignore every word I wrote about. I hope that for the rest of you this post will be helpful.

Kind regards,

The Saker

The Future of Islam in Western Europe

May 05, 2017



With the upcoming French Presidential election in France, the topic of Islam in Europe has again become central to the political discourse. This is nothing new: we also saw that in the UK, in Holland, in Austria and even in Switzerland, [where the Muslim communities were banned – by popular referendum – from building minarets](#) (even though only four minarets existed in Switzerland before that referendum)

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swiss_minaret_referendum,_2009).

Tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims are clearly on the rise, not only due to some more or less racist or anti-immigrant feelings in the general population, but also due to the often appalling behavior of some refugees from Muslim countries (assaults, rapes, hooliganism) and even some Muslim communities in Europe (advocacy for terrorism, attempts to impose Sharia law). Before the situation gets better (assuming it ever will), it will most likely get worse, much worse.

So what are the options here?

First, let's agree with Otto von Bismarck's wise words that "*politics is the art of the possible*". Those Europeans who think that they will simply expel all Muslims from

Europe or somehow manage to eliminate Islam from Europe are deluded. Likewise, those (rather few) Muslims who want to create some kind of Caliphate in Europe are no less deluded. In fact, all those who offer simple, straightforward “solutions” to the current crisis would be well advised to study some Hegelian dialectics to understand that the outcome of this crisis will not be the return to a *status quo ante* or the creation of an absolutely new reality.

Second, I submit that neither Muslim immigrants nor Islam itself will ever leave Europe. Like it or not, they are here to stay. Why? Simply because while some groups, such as illegal immigrants, can be expelled from a country or even from the European continent, others, such as Muslims holding European citizenships or local/native converts to Islam are simply not expellable. This is impossible legally, and this is impossible practically ... (expel where? how?). I have personally worked in refugee centers in Switzerland (as a translator and interpreter) and I have worked as an analyst for the Swiss General Staff where the issue of refugees was often front and center, and I can promise you that anybody who really knows how the system works also fully realizes that most of these immigrants are here to stay, even the pseudo-political refugees who are, in reality, economic immigrants and not political refugees at all (about 99% of so-called "political refugees"). At best, the EU could, in theory, and with an immense effort, close its borders to future immigrants. Not likely, but at least possible. But mass expulsions are simply not an option.

Third, those Muslims who are already in Europe will inevitably climb the social ladder even if right now they are at the bottom. Many of them are young, many of them have suffered hardships which most Europeans could never overcome. Their family, tribal, ethnic and religious ties are much stronger than the ones you can observe in the modern "nuclear" family of most Europeans.

Last, but not least, their social drive is much stronger than the one found in "established" Europeans circles. So even if the current generation is poorly educated and not integrated into the European society, the next one will be. I have seen that with many other economic migrants such as Italians or Albanians. So when you see that Iraqi woman sweeping the floors of your local hospital, remember that, in ten years or so, her daughter will likely work at the same hospital, but as the medical doctor. In other words, the social power of the Muslim community will inevitably grow.

Does that mean that the EU will become ISIS-occupied territory where all women will end up wearing burkas and/or raped; all men forced to convert to Islam or murdered; that slave markets will spring up all over the country; that Sharia law will be imposed on everybody, and that homosexuals will be stoned to death?

Of course not! This is a silly caricature of Islam created and promoted by the AngloZionist 1%ers who run the Empire and who are trying to artificially create a clash of civilization which would allow them to remain in power and to continue pulling the strings from behind the scenes.

For one thing, Muslims will remain a rather small minority in Europe for the foreseeable future. But even more importantly, the kind of “Hollywood ISIS-Islam” which I portrayed in the paragraph above is not at all the kind of Islam most Muslims want to live in. In fact, many of them fled their own country precisely to avoid living in a [Takfiri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Takfir) “Caliphate” (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Takfir>)

You might ask me about those Wahabi crazies who have already murdered many Europeans with screams of “Allahu Akbar” on their lips. Aren’t they bona fide ISIS-types? Well, that is a complicated issue. For example, did you notice the vast majority of these so-called “Islamic” crazies had strong ties to the European security services? That some of them even had traveled to Israel? Doesn’t it seem strange to you that their attacks somehow always seem to be scheduled to coincide with important political events in Europe? Could there have been a genuine ISIS attack in Europe? Yes. But I am pretty sure that most of them were Gladio-style false flags executed by EU or US special services.

I will readily agree that there are real and dangerous al-Qaeda/ISIS types in Europe right now. Yes, they do represent a real risk. But unlike most refugees, these guys do violate European laws and legal action can be taken against them. In theory, Europe could even re-introduce the death penalty for terrorism or even for apology of terrorism. I know, that ain’t happening anytime soon; but what matters is that this will depend on a political decision - the political will of the Europeans. Not so for mass expulsions which are impossible regardless of any political decision or will.

Could there be an uprising or even a civil war in Europe? Yes, but only as long as the governments in power have a vested interest in letting one happen or creating one. As soon as the national authorities give the security forces and the military the green light to intervene and suppress the insurrection it's "game over" for the al-Qaeda types.

So while Islam per se or Muslims, in general, are not expellable from Europe, the European nations will be able to deal with the security situation provided there is a political will to do so.

Right now the European political class is split into two equally misguided political camps:

1. Those who think that any criticism of Muslims is "Islamophobic".
2. Those who think that all Muslims and Islam are bad, bad, bad, bad.

These are very primitive and fundamentally misguided positions. More importantly, both of these beliefs are bound to result in failure to achieve anything. For the time being, many Europeans and Americans appear to be stuck in this false choice, but no matter how long it takes, reality will eventually catch up with them and they will realize that there is no such thing as one "Islam" or a single type of "Muslim". The truth is that the world of Islam is extremely diverse and that all of the ingredients needed for a complete defeat of Takfiris (whether of the al-Qaeda, ISIS, al-Nusra or any other kind) can be found inside Islam. In fact, they can only be found inside Islam. Let me illustrate my point by making a simple comparison between Russia and the EU.

Unlike the EU, Russia has one single central government and a strong one at that. The Russian intelligence and security services are amongst the best on the planet, as is the Russian military. Russia does not suffer from the disease of political correctness: it is totally acceptable in Russia to denounce Islamic terrorism in the harshest possible terms. In fact, Putin even made a famous statement about "offing the terrorists in the toilets if needed" and the Russians did exactly that: they killed every single Chechen Wahabi leader and, far from denying it, they proudly proclaimed it. The key difference with the EU is that Putin and the Russian people had the political will to stop the insurgency in Chechnia, even if that meant turning all of Chechnia into a pile of smoking rubble.

Yet, at the same time, Putin made major efforts to support the Muslim community in Russia. Not only did he build a huge (and beautiful) mosque in Moscow, he has embarked on a major program to support the growth of traditional Islam in Russia (just as he has done with the Orthodox Church). As for Chechnia, Putin has made Ramzan Kadyrov something of a "political son" and has given the Chechens an extremely wide autonomy, especially in matters of religion. So is Putin anti-Muslim or

pro-Muslim? Neither. Putin understands a simple thing which, so far, totally eludes Western politicians: Russians are very good at killing Takfiris, but only Muslims can kill Takfirism.

The threat has never been Islam. The threat is [Takfirism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Takfir)

(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Takfir>).

Here is how Wikipedia defines the concept of “Takfir”: “In Islamic law, takfir or takfeer (Arabic: **تكفير** . takfir) refers to the practice of excommunication, one Muslim declaring another Muslim as Kafir (non-believer)”. Please read this again carefully. The practice of declaring “another Muslim” as a non-believer. **Another Muslim!**

So the key characteristic of Takfiris is that they believe that all those who do not follow their version of Islam are not even Muslims. How do you think that this makes these other Muslims feel about the Takfiris? Actually, there is nothing wrong in theological terms with the notion of “Takfir” just as there is nothing wrong with the notion of “excommunication” or, for that matter, “anathema” or “heretic”. These are categories which, when properly used, are indispensable for specific types of theological arguments. However, just as “excommunicate”, “anathema” or “heretic” can be used by some as insults, slander or even calls to murder, “Takfirism” is first and foremost a mindset. Guns and bullets cannot defeat a mindset. In fact, only ideas can defeat other ideas. The Russians know that.

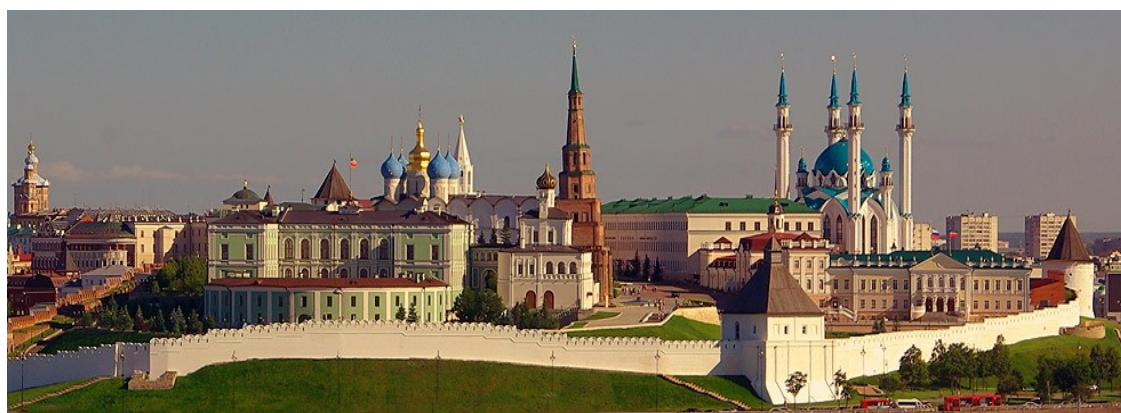
There are several videos on YouTube (alas, in Russian) which show Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov coming to the location of a battle with Chechen extremists and engaging the terrorists in a theological dispute about Islam. Instead of just ordering his troops to kill them all, he challenges them by asking them “*so you think that you are Muslims and we are not?*” or “*how is our society not Islamic?*”. And his favorite one “*if you can find a single quote in the Quran proving to me that what I do is not Islamic then I will immediately cease doing it*”. This does not always work. Some refuse to surrender and they are all inevitably killed (there is zero tolerance for Takfiris in Chechnia). But frequently this does work. Terrorists lay down their weapons, come out and instead of being abused and jailed or simply shot, they are sent to special prisons where Islamic preachers come and spend long hours teaching them about true Islam. And more often than not, when these young men come out they become volunteers for the Chechen security forces!

Now I ask you – could an Orthodox Christian or an agnostic achieve the same result? Never, of course. So this is why the non-Muslim security forces, while still present in and around Chechnia, are always kept in a reserve and support role. The primary task to police Chechnia is fully entrusted to the Chechens themselves. There are always powerful Russian forces on high alert ready to intervene should the situation suddenly get out of control, but by now the real battle is not fought with guns, it is fought with ideas and, as Putin has said it many times, only real, traditional Islam, can defeat Takfirism.

Right now, most Western politicians simply don't get it. Or, if they do, they don't dare say it. But sooner or later the Europeans will have to come to that absolutely inevitable conclusion. And when that happens, they will finally realize that Islam and the Muslims who practice it are never the enemy. The enemy is a relatively small sect of Para-Islamic crazies which originated in the 13th century and which remained largely on the fringes of the Islamic world until it was given an immense boost first by the House of Saud and, later, by the US CIA. Today, the Takfiris are still the instrument of the AngloZionist Empire; they are the infection which is unleashed against any country daring to reject the Empire's dominion. Furthermore, the Takfiris are, first and foremost, a threat to any and all other variants of Islam, whether Shia or Sunni.

In conclusion – a beautiful image and a symbol.

Take a look at this photo:



It shows the “Kremlin” (traditional Russian fortress) in the city of Kazan. Notice how the Orthodox churches and the mosque beautifully blend together?

Here is another photo of this beautiful sight:



Is this not serene and peaceful?

Now please take a quick look at the [history of Kazan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazan) as outlined in Wikipedia (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazan>). Kazan was a city where Christians and Muslims viciously persecuted each other. Both sides practiced forced conversions and both sides engaged in full-scale massacres. In recent times, following the break-up of the Soviet Union, things almost got ugly again; there was a short-lived but very vocal local separatist movement. Then cool heads prevailed. But the fact is that the history of Kazan is hardly idyllic and that a lot of innocent blood has been shed there. The point here is that after centuries of warfare both Muslims and Orthodox Christians have learned how to coexist in peace and even create something truly beautiful, like this Kremlin, together. This would not have been possible with the Takfiris; the hateful and insane monsters who took pride in destroying the beautiful Syrian city of Palmyra. For them there is nothing beautiful in the photo above, it is a blasphemy. Should they ever seize power in Kazan, they would definitely destroy it all, including the mosque.

The lesson here is simple. First, former enemies do sometimes become friends and allies and, second; the church and mosque of the Kazan Kremlin protect each other and make this Kremlin far stronger than if only one of the two buildings was standing inside its walls.

Mosques are here to stay in Europe too, and the short-sighted who don't know history will view this as the end of their civilization and they are the ones who, without ever realizing it, will uselessly delay the eventual defeat of Takfirism in Europe and elsewhere. Those who do understand the real dynamics at play will see this as something very different; a chance at rebirth and a fantastic opportunity to truly crush Takfirism, both at home and abroad.

Right now Putin's Russia is the example of how "it is done". But the West is too busy demonizing everything "Putin" and supporting anything Russophobic, such as the Nazis in the Ukraine, that it simply cannot follow this example. But maybe a new generation of European politicians will.



Russia's "Civilizational Choice"

September 25, 2015

This week, Vladimir Putin and a large number of national and foreign dignitaries and guests have inaugurated the biggest mosque in Europe: the new Moscow Cathedral Mosque.



This was a big event, much awaited by the many tens of thousands of Russian Muslims who live in the Russian capital and who, in the past, have had to pray in the streets due to the lack of a mosque big enough to accommodate them all. This event, however, has a significance which much exceeds just the local lack of space. The truth is that most Muslims who prayed in the Moscow city center wanted more than just a bigger building – they wanted an official acknowledgment of their existence and of their importance for Russia. Now, this much-awaited acknowledgment has finally happened and the famous Moscow city center will feature 240-foot tall golden minarets which will elegantly complement the traditional Orthodox cupolas. But I would argue that this event is even bigger than just a recognition of the role Islam plays in modern Russia – I believe it to be the expression of a profound civilizational choice.

We have heard a lot about “civilizational choices” in the context of the Ukrainian civil war. The Western propaganda machine turned what was a struggle between various Ukrainian oligarchs into a “civilizational choice”, hence the slogan “*Україна це Європа*” (the Ukraine is Europe). What is implied here is that the Ukraine is part of

the civilized “West” while Russia is some kind of “Asiatic” realm, populated by people who neither understand nor like the so-called “European values” and against whom the “civilized” Ukrainians need to stand in defense of Europe. This is just a rehashing of the old Russophobic notion of the [Marquis de Custine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marquis_de_Custine) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marquis_de_Custine) who famously said: "*Grattez le Russe, et vous verrez un Tartare*" (scratch the Russian and you will find the Tatar). Hitler also warned about the “Asiatic” nature of the “Russian sub-humans”. Paradoxically, while these Russia-haters never understood Russia, they were still on to something very real: the fact that while even though in the recent past (roughly between the 18th and 21st centuries) Russia was ruled by pro-Western elites, most of the Russian people never surrendered to the acculturation process imposed by their rulers and while they externally complied, internally, on the level of their *ethos*, they kept their ancient roots.

Historically, Russia has been the product of three main factors: Russians take most of their ethnic stock from the ancient Slavic people who lived in what is today called the Ukraine; their religion and worldview from the Orthodox Christianity inherited from the Eastern Roman Empire (mistakenly called "Byzantium" in the West); and their statehood from the Tatar occupation which unified various small principalities into one unified state. True, since Peter I, Russian elites (Monarchists or Communists) tried hard to "westernize" the Russian people, but since the coming to power of Putin, this tendency has finally been reversed. This is why Putin enjoys an 80%+ support in poll after poll while the Russian elites hate him. The events in the Ukraine further accelerated this process: the Ukrainian *pseudo* “civilizational choice” did result in a *real* Russian civilizational choice which has too many implications for full discussion here, but one of these is the embracing of Islam as an integral part of Russia.

In itself, this acceptance of Islam as part of Russia is nothing new. Czar Nicholas II, who was an extremely pious Orthodox Christian and who has been glorified as a saint by the Russian Orthodox Church, personally chose the central location of what was then the biggest mosque in Europe – right in the middle of the then capital of Russia, Saint Petersburg. So what Putin is doing now is just a direct continuation of what was done before him.

Still, less than 20 years after two wars in the Balkans (Bosnia, Kosovo) and two wars inside Russia (both in Chechnia) very few had predicted that Muslim Chechens would fight in defense of Orthodox Christians in the Donbass, and Putin would inaugurate

the biggest mosque in Europe just a mile away from the Kremlin. The reality, of course, is that these wars did not pitch Russia against Islam, but Russia against a very specific form of Saudi-backed Wahabi Islam which, itself, was organized and controlled by the AngloZionist Empire.

Most Russians, including Putin himself, are acutely aware of the huge difference between what they call “traditional Islam” and Wahabi/Takfiri Islam and they see the latter as an instrument of the USA to destroy those countries and regimes which refuse to submit to the AngloZionist Empire.

In the West, we mostly hear about how "Islamic terrorists" kill Christians in Syria, Yazidis in Iraq or even Hindus in India. In Russia, however, people regularly hear how Wahabi terrorists murder *Muslim* religious leaders and personalities (especially in southern Russia) and how the Wahabis consider all other Muslims, as infidels and idolaters. In other words, Russians don't see an “Islamic threat”, but only a “Wahabi/Takfiri” one.

The same goes for history. While in the West we are told that the Crusades opposed “Christendom” and Islam, in Russia the Orthodox Christians fully remember that they were on the same receiving end of the Papist Crusades as the Muslims and many Russians even remember that the Pope ordered a “[Northern Crusade](#)” to destroy Russian Orthodoxy. Finally, even a cursory look at the history of the Ukraine tells Russians everything they need to know about how the Papacy has always persecuted the “Photian schismatics” (Orthodox Christianity) “*ad majorem Dei gloriam*” (for the greater glory of God). In contrast, relations between Orthodox Christians and Muslims have by and large been peaceful. The notable exception to this was the Ottoman Empire which had always viciously persecuted Orthodox Christianity, but that kind of behavior was always an *Ottoman* characteristic, not a Muslim one.

As Colonel-General (3 star general) [Vladislav Achalov](#) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Crusades) said: “*Православные и Правоверные всегда договаряются!*” (the Orthodox and the Faithful will always find an agreement). He is right. While on a dogmatic level Islam and Orthodoxy are fundamentally incompatible (Islam sees Christ as a man, Orthodoxy as Son of God and God Himself), on a cultural and social level there are no incompatibilities at all. In fact, the two religions share a lot of common views, especially on daily social issues. It is not a coincidence that the same city which now will host the biggest mosque in Europe also banned “gay pride” parades for the next 100 years.

The recent events in the Middle-East are also having their impact on Russia. One can often hear in the Russian media and blogosphere the idea that “the Syrians are killing Wahabis terrorists over there so we don’t have to do that over here” and most people understand that Daesh is not only a problem for the Middle-East but also a direct threat to the Caucasus and Central Asia. Nor are Russian decision makers under any illusions about what can happen in Afghanistan. This is why they have turned the so-called “soft underbelly of Russia” into what [I would call the “armored underbelly of Russia”](http://thesaker.is/russia-has-hardened-her-southern-border-politically-and-militarily/). (<http://thesaker.is/russia-has-hardened-her-southern-border-politically-and-militarily/>)

Still, while Russian soldiers and special units can kill Wahabis in their thousands, no amount of military force can really eliminate Wahabism itself. Only Islam can truly defeat Wahabism. The perfect example of that reality is Chechnia where the Russians won the war, but Akhmad and Ramzan Kadyrov truly won the peace (even today, Chechen Muslims hold all the primary security functions in Chechnia, while the Federal Forces remain primarily as a reserve force). Russians have no special preference as to which branch of Islam to support against Wahabism, as long as it is a traditional one which does not pose an immediate and major threat to everybody else. In Chechnia most Muslims are Sunni, Iranians and Hezbollah are Shia while the regime in Syria is Alawi. As for the country closest to Russia – Kazakhstan – most of its people are Sunni Muslims. Russia is even exploring, albeit with difficulty, the possibilities of forging closer contacts with Turkey, even though the Ottomans used to be the second worst enemy of Orthodox Christianity (after the Papacy, of course).

The contrast with the AngloZionist Empire could not be greater. While in the West most political leaders choose to deny that the West's current conflict is one pitting the "West" against "Islam", the western propaganda machine (Hollywood, TV, print media, etc.) is clearly demonizing Islam and Muslims in general. Furthermore, the current refugee crisis in Europe is often interpreted as an "Islamic" cultural threat to either secular or "Christian" Europe (pseudo and post-Christian, in reality, of course). French racists chose to blame it all on "Islam" completely overlooking that Christian Romanians and Gypsies could not integrate into French society either.

In the EU politicians are seriously asking whether the [hijab](http://arabsinamerica.unc.edu/identity/veiling/hijab/) (<http://arabsinamerica.unc.edu/identity/veiling/hijab/>) compatible with “western values”. For Orthodox Christians this is a no-brainer: enter into a traditional Orthodox church and you will see all the woman covering their heads with something

which looks very much like a *hijab*. Or take a traditional Russian doll – the famous *matryoshkas* – and look at what Russian women used to wear for centuries before the Russian elites tried to westernize them: the very same *hijab*. Finally, look at any Orthodox icon showing the Mother of God and look what she is wearing and, you guessed it, you will see something very similar to a modern *hijab*. In fact, the rules of modesty are almost the same ones in Islam and Orthodox Christianity, as is the preference for men to have beards. What you will never see amongst Orthodox Christians are the [Niqabs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niqab) (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niqab>) or [Burkas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burqa), (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burqa>) not even for monastics.

But that is not a practice amongst Russian Muslims either.

At this point, somebody will inevitably ask about alcohol, so I might as well address that here.

Russians still like their alcohol, especially their beloved vodka, and most will be unwilling to give it up. But most Russians are also acutely aware of the devastating effect the abuse of alcohol has had on the Russian people and society. So, if anything, as long as they are not forced to give up their own right to drink alcohol, they respect those who, like Muslims, decide not to drink it. So while this topic makes for good social conversation, it is really a non-issue since Muslims in Russia have never tried to impose a ban on alcohol on non-Muslims. Again, Tatarstan or Chechnia are not Saudi Arabia (even in Grozny the sale of alcohol is strictly regulated, but it is not banned like in some US “dry counties”).

The inauguration of the new Cathedral Mosque in Moscow is a symbol of a much larger and deeper phenomenon – the slow but steady *rapprochement* between the Orthodox and the Islamic world, it is the expression of a **Russian civilizational choice** which has finally given up any illusion of being part of the "West" and which is turning south (Middle-East), East (Siberia and China) and North (Siberia and the Arctic) and, in doing so, returning to the true historical roots of what I call the "Russian civilizational realm" – those parts of the Eurasian continent which were most affected and influenced by the Russian culture and people.

None of that means that Russia must necessarily be in any way hostile to the West. Of course, as long as the AngloZionists continue to support Nazis in the Ukraine and Takfiris in the Middle-East, while constantly undermining Russia economically and threatening her militarily, relations will remain tense. But most Russians would prefer

a friendly and mutually profitable relationship with the EU. The dream of a common house from the Atlantic to the Urals still has a lot of supporters in Russia. The sad reality, however, is that the Europeans seem completely unable to stand up even for their own, pragmatic, national interests. The way the EU shot itself in the foot with sanctions against Russia, or with the fantastically stupid war against Gadafi just proves to the Kremlin that the EU is just a voiceless US colony. I am sure that Russia will be willing to have a friendly partnership with Europe if and when the US-designed EU and NATO are finally replaced with something more European. But until then all the Russians can do is wait and attend to the multiple risks and opportunities presented by the rest of the planet.

Only time will show whether the so-called "West" can finally give up its centuries-old dream to subjugate Russia in one way or another. All Russia can do is to prepare for the worst and hope for the best while opening her capital to the Muslim world while keeping Papal visits and "gay pride" parades away.



The Ancient Spiritual Roots of Russophobia

November 06, 2016



Introduction

The term “Russophobia” (the hatred and/or fear of things Russian) has become rather popular in the recent years, courtesy of the anti-Russian hysteria of the AngloZionist Empire, but this is hardly a new concept. In his seminal book *“Russie-Occident – une guerre de mille ans: La russophobie de Charlemagne à la Crise Ukrainienne”* (“The West vs. Russia – a thousand year long war: russophobia from Charlemagne to the Ukrainian Crisis”) which I recently reviewed [here](#):

(<http://thesaker.is/guy-mettans-book-on-russophobia-is-a-must-read-for-any-person-interested-in-russia/>)

Guy Mettan places the roots of russophobia as early as the time of Charlemagne. How could that be? That would mean that russophobia predates the birth of Russia by a full two centuries? And yet, Mettan is correct, although even he does not paint the full picture.

What I propose to do today is not to discuss modern russophobia which has numerous causes and forms, but to look far back into history for the ancient spiritual roots of this relatively modern phenomenon.

My thesis will probably trigger even more condescending smirks, expression of outrage and accusations of bigotry and racism than usual. That is fine. In fact, I will welcome them as a visceral reaction to what I propose to uncover below. One glaring weakness of my argument will be that I won't bother presenting numerous sources as evidence for my assertions. Not only am I not writing an academic paper here, I simply don't have the time and space needed to substantiate all my claims. Still, all the facts and claims I make below are easily verifiable for anybody with an Internet connection. My goal today is not to convince the naysayers, but to offer a few hopefully useful pointers to those seeking to connect the dots and see the full picture. This being, said, let's now go far back in time.

A 2000-year-old dispute

Those who believe that the Romans crucified Christ better stop reading here and go back to the comfort of ignorance. Those who have actually read the New Testament or, for that matter, the basic Judaic texts on this topic, know that Christ was accused and executed for the crime of blasphemy: He claimed to be the Son of God, the Son of Man (a messianic title), the Messiah announced by the prophets and that He was God: "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM*" (John 8:58) (this "I AM" is a direct reference to Exodus 3:14). This claim is what split the Jewish people into those who accepted Christ's claims and believed Him and those who did not. What is interesting here is the view which the Jews who did accept Christ had of those Jews who did not. As we all know, Saint John the Theologian wrote the famous words "*I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan*" (Rev 2:9). And Christ Himself said, "*If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham*" (John 8:39). What we see here is the basis for a claim which was first made in the Apostolic times and which was later fully endorsed and further developed by the Church Fathers: those Jews who rejected Christ thereby lost their "Jewishness" and the "new Jews" are the Christians, regardless of ethnicity, which now have become the new "chosen people". In our modern times of hyper-political correctness and generalized "ecumenical dialogs of love", Christians are mostly ignorant of these facts and, when they are not, they dare not mention them in public. At a time when Popes declare that Jews are their "older brothers"; that they need not accept Christ, and that Christians and Jews are awaiting the same 2nd. coming of Christ; saying that Christianity denies Jews their very Jewish identity is definitely "*mauvais ton*". But before the 20th. century, this Christian claim that modern "Jews"

were not really Jews anymore was common knowledge, both amongst Christians and amongst Jews.

[Sidebar: As I explained it in some detail [here](http://thesaker.is/off-topic-but-apparently-needed-judaism-and-christianity-back-to-basics/comment-page-2/), (<http://thesaker.is/off-topic-but-apparently-needed-judaism-and-christianity-back-to-basics/comment-page-2/>) modern “Judaism” is not the religion of “Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” but the religion of Maimonides, Karo and Luria and has its roots in the teachings of the sect of the Pharisees, the Talmud, and the Kabbalah. The closest modern heir to Christ-rejecting Jews of the times of Christ would be the Karaite sect. Modern “Judaism” really ought to be called “Pharisaic Talmudism”. For a traditional Patristic look at Pharisaic Talmudism, please see [here](http://www.preteristarchive.com/ChurchHistory/0386_chrysostom_adversus-judeaus.html) (http://www.preteristarchive.com/ChurchHistory/0386_chrysostom_adversus-judeaus.html) and [here](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/01281.htm). (<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/01281.htm>)

Conversely, Judaic teachings about Christ are not sympathetic either. A quick read of the [Toldot Yeshor](http://jewishchristianlit.com/Topics/JewishJesus/toledoth.html), (<http://jewishchristianlit.com/Topics/JewishJesus/toledoth.html>) for that matter, the passages about Christ in the Talmud, will convince anyone in need of convincing that the Pharisees’ hatred for Christ was not satiated with His crucifixion. And lest anybody think that this is all racist drivel by blue-eyed Nazis, here is a [good article on this topic from Ha’artez](http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/2.209/do-jews-have-a-jesus-problem-1.275951) corroborating it all.

(<http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/2.209/do-jews-have-a-jesus-problem-1.275951>)

Nowadays an uninformed observer might erroneously conclude that there is a big love-fest between Judaics and Christians, but to the extent that this is true, this is solely due to the fact that most modern Christians and Judaics have long ceased to believe, think and act in accordance with their own traditions. The reality is that for traditional Christians, modern Judaics are fallen, lapsed, people who have failed to live up to their election by God and who now are determined to take by force what had been promised to them by God. For traditional Judaics, Christians are idolaters of the worst kind, as they worship a blaspheming magician, born of a promiscuous hairdresser and a Roman legionnaire, who was justly executed for his crimes and who now forever is confined to hell where he boils in excrements. And lest anybody believe that this hostility is only a matter of a long gone past, I would add that while the Judaics are still waiting for their Messiah, the Christian *consensus Patrum* indicates that this Judaic messiah will be the very same person whom Christ and the Apostles called the Antichrist.

Why does all this matter? It matters because at the very core of it all is the claim that Gentiles have replaced Jews as the chosen people of God; that Christians are the "new Jews", and that modern-day Jews are simply not Jews at all; not only because most of them are more Khazarian than Jewish, but because their faith, traditions, and beliefs are not the ones of the ancient Jewish people as described in the Old Testament. In other words, Christianity says that Jews are not Jews.

A 1000-year-old dispute

Western history books usually say that Rome was sacked in 410 and fell in 476. The former is true, but the latter is completely false as it conflates the city of Rome and the Roman Empire. Only the city of Rome and the Western Roman Empire came to an end in the 5th century, but that very same Roman Empire continued to exist in the East for a full 1000 years (!), until 1453 when the Ottomans finally captured the city of Constantinople. In fact, the imperial capital of the Roman Empire had been moved from Rome to the city of Constantinople, the "New Rome", by Emperor Constantine in 320. Thus, the Rome which, at various times, Visigoths, Vandals, and Ostrogoths sacked was no longer the capital of the Roman Empire.

These two crucial dates, 476 and 1453, are often used to mark the beginning and the end of the Middle-Ages (along with other dates between the 5th and the 15th century). And since I am setting up the crucial dates for my argument, I will add another one here: 1054, the "official" date for the so-called "Great Schism" between, on one hand, Rome (the city) and, on the other, the other four Patriarchates founded by the Apostles: the Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople.

At this point, things get complicated and a halfway decent explanation of what really took place would require no less than 100 pages, including a discussion of dogmatic theology, culture, sociology and, of course, politics. The best I can provide at this point are a few bullet-point style sentences summarizing what happened:

The Franks, especially Charlemagne, decided that they would re-create the Roman Empire. To be truly Romans, the Franks also wanted to make their own, original, contribution to Christian theology. They did so by making an addition to the so-called "Symbol of Faith", or "Credo" in Latin, a text which summarizes the key Christian beliefs. Furthermore, since they were now occupying Rome, the former imperial capital of the Empire, the Franks felt that they were in control of the spiritual capital of the Christian world and that, therefore, the rest of the Christian world ought to accept

the primacy of the bishop of Rome – called the "Pope" – and his right to impose a new dogma on the entire Christian world. Following roughly 200 years of tensions between the (Frankish-occupied) Rome and the (still free) Eastern Roman Empire, the final separation took place in 1054 when the Pope excommunicated the Patriarch of Constantinople who then returned him the favor. What is important for our purposes is this: not only did the Frankish invasion of Rome mark the end of the Roman civilization in the West, it also cut-off the western world from the Roman Empire which continued to exist for another ten centuries. The process of severance between the two parts of the Empire began in the 5th century following the fall of the city of Rome and continued throughout the following centuries. During the 10th century, Rome suffered during the so-called dark ages (*saeculum obscurum*) and the so-called "Rule of the Harlots" (*pornokratia*). At a time when the Roman Empire in the east was almost at the apex of its glory, the Franks were indulging in an orgy of destruction and corruption which completely changed the face of the western part of the European continent and completely severed the vital cultural and spiritual ties which had kept the Roman Empire together in the past centuries.

During the following 1000 years, while the Roman Empire continued its existence in the East, the European Middle-Ages slowly and painfully gave birth to a new civilization, the West European civilization, which really took its first mature shape during the Renaissance with its re-discovery of the ancient Greek and Roman world. Whatever form this so-called "re-discovery" took, it is a fact that the 1000 years of the Middle-Ages separate modern western civilization from the Roman civilization and that modern Europe was born not of the Romans, but of the Franks. The (Orthodox) East, however, has never known any "Middle-Ages" and has maintained a cultural and religious continuity to the ancient Christian world and the Roman Empire.

In the West, the so-called "Roman Catholic Church" (another misnomer – there is nothing Roman or "Catholic" – meaning "universal" – about the Papacy as it is Frankish and local) likes to present itself as the original Church whose roots and traditions go back to the Apostolic times. This is simply false. The reality is that the religion which calls itself "Roman Catholic" is a relatively new religion, younger than Islam by several centuries, which was born in the 11th century of a rejection of the key tenets of the 1000 year long Christian faith. Furthermore, from the moment of its birth, this religion has embarked on an endless cycle of innovations including the 19th century (!) dogmas of the Papal infallibility and the Immaculate Conception. Far from

being conservative or traditionalists, the Latins have always been rabid innovators and modernists.

Nowadays there are many Christian denominations out there, but only the Orthodox Churches can testify to the fact that the Frankish local Church is neither Roman, nor Catholic; that its roots are not in the Apostolic times, but in the (dark) Middle-Ages and that far from being a heir to the 2000 year old faith “*which the Lord gave, was preached by the Apostles, and was preserved by the Fathers*” to use the words of Saint Athanasios, the Latin faith is nothing but a collection of deviations from the original Christian faith.

The feared and hated witness

Now we see a pattern here. Both for the Judaics and for the Latins, the Orthodox Christians are the only witnesses out there who can (and do!) openly challenge not only their legitimacy but their very identity. From an Orthodox perspective (and here I am referring to the traditional, Patristic, point of view) ***modern Jews are not Jews and the Catholics are not catholic***. In both cases, we are dealing with very successful frauds, but frauds nonetheless. Orthodox Christians believe that they, and they alone, are both the real Jews and the real Catholics. Modern Jews are nothing but Pharisees while Latins are simply heretics. Jews were called to be the Chosen People while Rome used to be recognized as the “first amongst equals” by the other Patriarchates. Alas, in both cases a tragic fall from grace occurred in a manner reminiscent of Lucifer’s fall from Heaven (“*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!*” Isa 14:12). And to those who would say that such a claim is preposterous, Orthodox Christians would simply point at the immense corpus of Patristic writings which have always supported that claim. The only option for somebody rejecting this claim is to reject Christianity itself.

My argument here is not a historical or theological one. Regardless of whether one accepts or not the Orthodox view of modern “Judaism” and “Roman Catholicism” – it is certain that both Judaic and Latin were quite aware of this view (there were plenty of polemical texts written over the centuries by all sides to this dispute) and that this challenge to their very legitimacy and identity was perceived as a monumental affront and, when supported by an immense and powerful empire like the Russian one, a mortal enemy which had to be either conquered or eliminated.

[Sidebar: Islam. It is interesting to note here that Orthodox Christianity, which Muslims called “Rum” as in Rome, in no way challenges the legitimacy or identity of Islam. While Islam and Christianity have plenty of irreconcilable theological differences, Muslims do not claim to be Jews or Christians. As for Orthodox Christians, they obviously do not claim to be the true or original, Muslims. Thus the co-existence of these two religions is not logically mutually exclusive even if their theologies are fundamentally incompatible].

The modern dispute

It would be ridiculous to claim that the root cause(s) of modern fear and/or hate of things Russian can all be explained by ancient theological arguments. In reality, neither Russia nor the West are all that religious nowadays. And while there is definitely a religious rebirth taking place in Russia, it remains also true that only a minority of Russians are truly religious or well-versed in Orthodox theology. Furthermore, there are plenty of reasons why some hate/fear Russia which have absolutely nothing to do with religion, including the fact that Russia is, and has always been, an unconquered military superpower, that the Soviet regime has oppressed millions of people in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union, and that any more or less sovereign and independent regime in Russia stands as the main obstacle for the West to take control of Russia's immense resources, and many other reasons. As for (truly religious) Judaics and Latins, they are a small minority compared to the vast majority of largely agnostic people around them. In reality, modern Russophobia has numerous independent “vectors” all contributing to a grand “sum vector” expressed in the West’s current policies towards Russia. And yet...

Regardless of the actual level of religiosity in Russia, Russia remains the objective historical and cultural heir to the Roman Empire: the First Rome fell in 476, the Second Rome fell in 1453 while the Third Rome fell in 1917.

[Sidebar: A Fourth Rome cannot happen simply because, unlike what happened with the First and Second Rome, the Third one could not “pass on” its role to a hypothetical Fourth one. Seventy years of Communist rule will forever remain an insurmountable barrier between Russia, the Third Rome, and modern Russia and no true succession is now possible]

To ignore the historical importance of a Christian Roman civilization which lasted from the 4th to the 20th century would be a major oversight. Those 16 centuries have

had a huge impact on the Russian culture, even upon those Russians who are only superficially religious or outright agnostic, and it still can be felt today. The same is true for what is called the “West” nowadays: what is the AngloZionist Empire if not the cultural continuation of the British Empire [with the Zionist \(and, thus, Judaic\) element recently added to it?](#) (<http://www.haaretz.com/world-news/u-s-election-2016/1.749443>) And don't let the fact that Protestants and Anglicans are not "Roman Catholics" distract you from the reality that Protestantism itself is just the offspring from the spiritual intercourse between its Latin and Judaic parents, just as Freemasonry – the dominant ideology and worldview today – is the offspring resulting from the spiritual intercourse between Protestantism and Pharisaic Judaism. Whether we are aware of it or not, we live in “civilizational realms” which have ancient roots and our worldview and outlook on life are often shaped by a past which we often know very little about.

Conclusion

There is a clash of civilizations taking place. It does not primarily oppose a putative “Christian West” to Islam. For one thing, the modern “West” has long ceased to be Christian and should now be categorized as post-Christian. Furthermore, the Muslim world is not united and does not have the resources to meaningfully oppose the AngloZionist Empire. Until China or Latin America or some other civilization truly rises up to be able to challenge the current world order, Russia is the only country which will dare to openly challenge the very legitimacy of the western political system and the ideology it has been built upon. Modern Russia is both capable and willing to challenge the dominant western ideology (from Capitalism to the belief that homosexuality is a normal and [healthy variation of human sexuality](#)) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homosexuality_and_psychology) *precisely* because of her position as the heir to, and continuator of, the Christian Roman Empire. True, for the past 300 years or so, Russia has been ruled by a generally westernized ruling elite, but that elite itself has always remained a foreign superstructure imposed upon the Russian nation which never truly identified with it. With Putin, Russia has finally found a leader who does not represent the interests of the elites, but rather the interests of the vast majority of the population – hence Putin's stratospheric popularity ratings. And that too frightens the West, especially the western elites who now feel that their rule is threatened by a nuclear superpower which is determined not to let them take over our entire planet. It is impossible to predict what will happen next. But it does appear likely to me that this ancient conflict between two fundamentally opposed

spiritualties and civilizations will come to some kind of a resolution, for better or for worse, in the near future.



The Fighting Imam of Donbass (MUST SEE!)

October 05, 2015

Dear friends,

This is an exceptionally interesting video which I have asked my brother in arms Tatzhit Mihailovich to subtitle for you: a Crimean Tatar imam is interviewed by a Russian Orthodox TV channel about his role in the anti-Nazi resistance of the Donbass and about his views on Islam and Russia. Great stuff!

Enjoy and a big THANK YOU to Tatzhit!

(please make sure to press the “cc” button to see the English captions)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmiMbUz5Qos>



Afterword by Mansoureh Tajik

When they say this fruit or that veggie is good for you, one must immediately ask “Where and how was it grown?” Chances are a lot of toxins and nutrients that were part of the land in which it grew and the water that irrigated the soil, too, became essential parts of that fruit or veggie. Like the vitamin, mineral, and nutrient contents, the toxic components also constitute the more detectable and palpable parts of the produce.

But there are also some not-so-apparent-and-tangible-but-very-important parts to that fruit and veggie. Things like the sweats, pains, and sufferings of the exploited farm workers, the broken hearts of the child laborers, the ruthlessness and unfair treatments by the overseers, the cheating of the traders, and the greed of the shareholders. Or perhaps the love and care of the gardener, the authentic labor of the laborer, and the sincerity and honesty of the seller, too, occupy a space in them. All these become the essential parts, the soul, and the spirit of those products. When we take a bite out of them, unavoidably and most often unwittingly, we take in all these other intangible parts as well. But what has any of this got to do with the book before us, the latest in the series of *The Essential Saker*?!

Like that fruit and veggie, *The Essential Saker*, too, is a human product. And human products and creations, like all other things and beings in the universe have some tangible and readily understood aspects that are easier to detect, to characterize, and to evaluate and describe. Then they also have some other very important aspects that are intangible and not so easy to discern unless we try to get help from proxies, surrogates, and allegories.

To advocate for this book, I could say, for instance, that it is a collection of cogent essays produced and chronicled by the Saker in the Saker blog. Like the three preceding *Essential Saker* books, it focuses on contemporary geopolitical issues of global importance in a unique and outstanding way. I could give examples of how it is so. I could also say *The Essential Saker* is remarkable and extraordinary in terms of relevance, clarity of content, and analytic techniques in exploring the many strategic and tactical global geopolitical issues of our time. I could go further and assert that the essays and their production and marketing location, the Saker’s blog, serve a truly important need for their penetrating views and sober analyses for many international readers. Readers who may then make informed decisions about where to stand and

what to do. Yes, I could say all that and more. But why say what I could when I can say what I should?!

There is a spirit and an intangible aspect to the Saker's work that is as compelling and consequential, if not more, as the tangible parts. To do justice to this work, the essence of that spirit should be brought to the surface as well. Perhaps an allegory could help.

There is a story-poem narrated in the form of a *qasida*¹ by Parviz Khanlari.² We were introduced to this poem in one of our literature books during the elementary school years in Iran. The story depicted a conversation between an eagle (*Oghāb*) and a crow (*Kalāgh*). It is useful to note that in many classic Persian poems, *Oghab* (eagle) and another bird *Shāhin* (falcon) are portrayed as having similar attitudes toward life and they are often used together and sometimes interchangeably in our classical stories and poems. So in this story, too, whenever you read "eagle/*Oghāb*" you could also think "falcon/*Shāhin*".

It was rumored that the median lifespan of an eagle was 30 years. The same rumor held that a crow lived for about 300 years. Around the time those rumors were buzzing, there was an eagle who had built a nest at the greatest heights. As he was approaching the end of his life, the eagle was distraught and wished he could have been bestowed a longer life. He remembered his father saying that he had heard from his grandfather who himself had heard from his great grandfather that somewhere down below lived a crow. Four generations of eagles had come and gone and seen the same crow. But the lucky crow had not approached even the middle years of his long life.

Deep in his heart, the eagle envied the crow's longevity. One day he decided to go down, pay the crow a visit, and hear from him first-hand the secret to his long life. He spread his wings and soared up in the sky. No one could ignore or deny the eagle's exalted and majestic presence up in the heavens. As he flew overhead, a mayhem spread down below nearer to the ground.

¹The *qasida* Persian poems reflect a style in long lyrical poems and often serve a philosophical, theological, or ethical purpose.

² Dr. Parviz Khanlari (1914-1990) was an Iranian thinker, linguist, and literary scholar of Persian culture and literature. One of his most well-known works was the poem *Oghāb va Kalāgh* (The Eagle and the Crow) from which the story in this forward is extracted.

Birds, filled with mixed feelings of fear and envy, hid themselves among tree branches. Rabbits and gazelles hurried into the depth of the jungle. And a shepherd followed the eagle's flight path keeping an apprehensive eye on the eagle and throwing a worried look at his flock. The eagle's mind was preoccupied by other more important matters though.

Finally, the eagle landed at the crow's doorstep. The crow, stricken by fear and curiosity, looked searchingly to the eagle and wondered to what he owed this unwelcome honor. The eagle told him about the purpose of his visit and asked the crow to reveal the secret to his very long life.

The crow was ambivalent, fearful, and intrigued. He could teach the eagle the secret of his long life, he promised, but under some conditions. The eagle must agree to live with the crow, to hang out with him and become his companion, and to do everything exactly as he does. The eagle accepted those conditions.

Bit by bit, the crow revealed the secret to his own longevity and the root cause of the eagle's short life. He chastised the eagle for always soaring so high above the ground and deep into the skies. He quoted his wise father who had always advised him to stay as close to earth surface and low places as possible.

Another secret, the crow revealed, was his love of stolen, decaying, and rotten stuff that increase the life of the scroungers by manifold without much struggle. In short, the crow instructed the eagle, he must give up on high standards and live a lowly life. In fact, he informed the eagle, he himself had a hidden paradise where there were so much goodies to eat and drink and such comfort to be enjoyed that if the eagle accompanied him to that place, he would be set for a long, happy, and comfortable life.

The eagle agreed to accompany the crow to his much-touted paradise. The paradise the crow spoke so highly of consisted of a landfill permeated with rotting smells, spoils and garbage. Streams of sewers were running through it. All sorts of flies and insects were buzzing around and maggots burrowing within. Rats and critters were rummaging underneath. The crow, very proud of the lavish spread and his own unparalleled hospitality and generosity, invited the eagle to feast on.

The eagle who had spent his entire life in high heavens and a pristine surrounding, the eagle who had spread his wings wide open and had not breathed but fresh air at dawn, the eagle who had often seen the clouds beneath his wings, the eagle who

abhorred handouts and thievery, the eagle who had not relied on anyone but his own struggles, the eagle who had not eaten but the freshest of the fresh from fruits of his own labor became very dizzy and passed out. With his eyes closed he imagined the blue skies, the depth of heavens, the beauty of sunrise, and vastness of the horizon, the lightness of breezes. He opened his eyes and saw nothing of the sort. Everywhere he looked, he saw sewer, humiliation, fear, theft, and a decaying repulsive surrounding.

He jumped, spread his wings, and as he was getting ready to take off, he turned to the crow and said, “Forgive me, my friend. To you your feast, your spoiled spread, your way of life and a very long life. To me, the apex, the heaven, and a short but honest and pure life.” The eagle then soared up into the sky as the crow sat on his lavish spread with a puzzled look. From the vantage point of the crow in just moments the eagle was visible only as a dot on the vastness of the blue sky. Moments later, he could no longer see any traces of the eagle.

For those who have accumulated some frequent-flyer miles with the Saker in his pristine and immaculate site, and through reading the collection of his essays, the *Oghāb/Shāhin* story’s message is self-evident. In the digital sky and the virtual horizon where the Saker flies there are no signs of morally corrupt images, implicit and/or explicit sexual innuendos, vulgar tricks to attract cheap clicks, barrage of commercial ads, corrupt and decaying junk for thought, bursts of racially hostile slanders and remarks. Such is the garden, the environment, the atmosphere within which the Saker essays have been cultivated. These, too, have become part of the very soul, the spirit, and the important essence of the *Essential Saker*. These, in my view, are what have made the Saker’s works the invaluable treasures they are.

In the age of universal corruption in the company of the crows, flying with *Shāhins* like the Saker, is a revolutionary act. The *Essential Saker IV* is an excellent runway for the take-off. By Grace of God, may the Saker always fly high.

Mansoureh Tajik

THE ESSENTIAL SAKER IV

"As British anthropologist Marilyn Strathern once said 'it matters what thoughts we think with'. This rigorous compendium of The Sakers writings, that began with a ripple and now in its fourth wave matters more than ever"

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— Paulo Avelar

"You are on the brink of being the proud owner of a special book. As a reader and commentator on his site, I can assure you of something: The Saker chooses bold subjects, has sharp analyses, won't disappoint you with clichés, and will put you to thinking because he leaves room for that. Wisdom is not only the expression of smart matter. Moreover it is asking the right questions at the right moment. If you are ready for that, then this book might be just right for you."

— Rob



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