

# NEO-RELIGIONISM OF THE POST IDEOLOGICAL RUSSIA

## (Refeudalisation of Europe – I Part)

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The *lonely superpower* (US) vs. the *bear of the permafrost* (Russia), with the *world's last cosmopolite* (EU) in between. Is the ongoing calamity at the eastern flank of the EU a conflict, recalibration, *imperialism in hurry*, exaggerated anti-Russian xenophobia or last gasp of *confrontational nostalgia*?

Just 20 years ago, the distance between Moscow and NATO troops stationed in Central Europe (e.g., Berlin) was more than 1.600 km. Today, it is only 120 km from St. Petersburg. Is this a time to sleep or to worry? 'Russia no longer represents anything that appeals to anyone other than ethnic Russians, and as a result, the geopolitical troubles it can cause will remain on Europe's periphery, without touching the continent's core' – was the line of argumentation recently used by Richard N. Haass, President of the US Council of Foreign Relations. Is it really so?

Is there any intellectually appealing call originating from Russia? Russia is a legal, not an ideological, successor of the late Soviet Union. Many in Greece, Latin America and elsewhere in the world mingled the two. Does it still today represent a lonely champion of antifascism and (pan-) Slavism?

Is the Slavism, identity, secularism and antifascism, while abandoned in Eastern Europe, confused perhaps by the mixed signals from the austerity-tired Atlantic Europe and *über*-performing Central Europe?

For the EU, Ukraine is (though important) an item of the Neighborhood Policy and for the

US it is a geopolitical pivot. However, for Russia, it is all this plus emotional attachment. Without Ukraine, to what extent is Russia Christian and European?

Is the EU a subject or a hostage (like Ukraine) of the mega-geopolitical drama whose main and final stage is in the Asia-Pacific theater? What is the objective here – the ultimate score (territorial gain) or an altered style of the game (new emotional charge of confrontation added to the international relations)? What is a road map, an exit, a future perspective – relaxation or escalation? Hegemony, *hegemony*, or a global (post-dollar) honeymoon?

### **New religionism: Powerful self-imposed deterrent**

Without a socio-political cohesion via integralism, it is rather impossible to reverse the socio-economic decomposition of Russophone and Eastern Europe. Unity for cohesion does not mean a (rigid communist) unanimity. But, Europe's East is still mixing the two. Consequently, all three cohesive forces of Eastern Europe have disappeared: (i) atheistic elites (irrespectively from their ethnic, religious, social and linguistic background); (ii) antifascism; and (iii) Slavism. How to reinvigorate overall societal passions and drives for the enhancement of nation without unifying ideological narrative?

While the secularism of Atlantists increases the intellectual appeal of their indigenous ideology – that of neoliberalism, transcontinentally; the newly discovered neo-clericalism of Eastern and Russophone Europe plays, not an emancipating, but a powerful self-restraining role. At home, it only polarizes, fragments and undermines vital social consensus, and for abroad it serves as a powerful self-deterrent.

Simply, beyond its narrow ethnic frames or national borders such *neo-religionism* motivates none to nothing. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, dominated by the socially mobilized, secularized and knowledge-based nations across the world, *religionism* of East (static and rigid like its retrograde MENA sibling) only further alienates, isolates and marginalizes that region. It easily ends up in ethno-chauvinistic overtones that are not only isolating its proprietor, but also antagonizing or radically mobilizing its neighbors.

Globally, it means that while East remains entrenched in its 'newly discovered' *religionism*, only one ideology remains unchallenged and uncontested – that of Atlantist neoliberalism.

Logically, East neither controls its own narrative nor (interpretation of) history: Due to a massive penetration of Central Europe, East grossly relativized, trivialized and silenced its own past and present anti-fascism. Additionally, this region does not effectively control its media space. Media there (of too-often dubious orientation and unspecified ownership) is distracting vital public debates: discouraging, disorienting and silencing any sense of national pride, influence over destiny direction and to it related calls for self-(re) assessment.

Today, Eastern Europe is not even sure, if its anti-fascism should be a question of choice or a matter of pure survival. Its mental de-territorialisation is corrosive and deep.

## **Pauperised masses – empowered lumpen proletariat**

In a combination with above, the speed and dimensions of criminal redistribution of national wealth and cruel pauperisation of masses (euphemistically called ‘western style privatisation’ of 1990s) deeply transformed the East, turning many into a re-feudalized society. By the end of Yeltsin dizzy rule, even the biggest critics of the Soviet era were horrified by the post-Soviet destruction of Eastern Europe.

In 2000, much quoted Alexander Solzhenitsyn screamed out loudly: "Will we continue looting and destroying Russia until nothing is left? ... God forbid these ‘reforms’ should continue." For that, he was of course, silenced and marginalized, and never quoted.

Indeed, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, the severity, frequency and tempo of that social re-engineering via criminal redistribution of national wealth had no parallel historic example. Seems as if the region was left to choose between genocide (ex-YU) and its evil twin – social apartheid (elsewhere in the East)? Where were the famous dissidents from East? Why didn't the academia of Eastern Europe debate about it?

And, while famous East intelligentsia remains mute, answers are streaming from the dominant narrative, that of West. Moreover, describing who these new elites of the East are, western authors are breaking another Eastern taboo – quoting Karl Marx.

Number of quotation of Karl Marx in e.g. the New York Times, FAM, Economist, Wall Street Journal or other western neoliberal opinion-makers per annum is higher than all cumulative quotations of Karl Marx in Eastern Europe for the past two decades.

Thinkers of the East expelled Marx and Engels to (intellectual) Gulag indefinitely.

Hence, discussing the new emerging class on both sides of Atlantic (also *Useful Idiots* of Euro-Med theatre – a power-base of the so-called *Arab Spring*), Daniel Henninger does not hesitate to consider them a retrograde force of ‘lumpen proletariat’, outcasts turned professional dissidents, a fake class of ‘social scam’.

Writing in the WSJ (*Trumpen Proletariat*, July 06 2016), to support his argument, he states: “Karl Marx, in a particularly dyspeptic moment, offered this description of what he dismissed as the lumpen proletariat: ‘Alongside decayed roués with dubious means of subsistence and of dubious origin, alongside ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie, were vagabonds, discharged soldiers, discharged jailbirds, escaped galley slaves, swindlers, mountebanks, lazzaroni, pickpockets, tricksters, gamblers, pimps, brothel keepers, porters, literati, organ grinders, ragpickers, knife grinders, tinkers, beggars—in short, the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass, thrown hither and thither, which the French call la bohème.’”

New elites of neo-feudalism?! European dream refeudalised ...

