

Pavel Durov, the Superfluous Man . “He Will Share Data about His Users”

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Telegram owner Pavel Durov's detention in Paris over a month ago provoked a flurry of attention and animated comments. But soon thereafter the case strangely vanished from the radar screen. The high profile affair, which initially stirred enormous public interest on account of its privacy and freedom of expression ramifications, suddenly went cold after the French authorities published a lengthy list of grave criminal charges against Durov and released him provisionally on a 5-million- euro bail. In Paris, where Durov presumably was staying whilst waiting for the resolution of his case, not even the paparazzi exhibited much interest in catching up with him.

The unusual silence was finally broken the other day with [an announcement confirming what the savvier observers had suspected all along](#).

Behind the scene intense negotiations between the Telegram owner and the prosecutors were taking place and a deal had finally been reached. It has now been disclosed that contrary to Durov's initial assurances that he would never betray the trust of his platform users or renege on his commitment to freedom of expression, [he has in fact conceded to the authorities' key demand and will share data about his users with one or more of the interested governments](#).

This is an extraordinary but not wholly unexpected reversal. Since Telegram has nearly a billion users world-wide, it will have a significant impact on privacy in communications. But it is not strange at all if it is understood not as an individual aberration but as the modernised expression of the Russian literary archetype, the Superfluous man [лишний человек].

What are the main characteristics of this archetype and how do they line up with what Pavel Durov has revealed about himself? How does it interface with the segment of Russian society that Durov epitomises, which consists predominantly of ambitious young people who look to an imaginary concept of “the West” as the model to emulate, and which emerged after the demise of the Soviet Union?

Literary critics define the Superfluous man as a talented and capable individual who does not care much for social norms and marches to the beat of his own drum. That is Pavel Durov to a T. Besides a disregard for the values of his society, the Superfluous man may also be afflicted with such traits as cynicism and existential boredom. Perhaps but we do not know Durov personally well enough to say whether that is the case. The Superfluous man is typically indifferent or unsympathetic to the concerns of the society that surrounds him, he may even scoff at them, and he will often use the resources at his disposal to act in furtherance of his own comfort and security. He can be highly intelligent and capable, even

engaging, but at bottom he is self-absorbed and narcissistic and shows little interest in being charitable or using his position for the sake of some greater good. Here we see glimpses of Durov once again. The most altruistic act he is known to have done was to anonymously share his semen with about a hundred women in the expectation that this will result in the conception of genetically superior little geniuses like himself.

Beyond the particular traits that may define him, the Superfluous man is characterised also by a distinguishing spiritual condition: lack of a purpose in life in the form of a higher ideal.

To a notable degree, based on what we are finding out about him, Durov personally, and as a sociological phenomenon the class of mainly young, well-heeled and educated Russians from which he has sprung, exhibit many of the listed characteristics.

They plainly do not care for the core values of contemporary Russia and they are not keen to be part of or to help preserve the unique civilisation defined by those values. They take no pride in it and look for their models elsewhere. They do not feel particularly indebted to the nation and society that nurtured and raised them, fostered their talents and taught them everything they know. They make those skills and talents available to the highest bidder on the global market.

Without firm grounding in anything that transcends the Self, their resilience is fragile, their backbone highly flexible. Adherence to lofty principles (respect for privacy and freedom of expression in Durov's case) is mainly verbal and ephemeral, subject to compromise at the first sign of serious pressure or prospect of sacrifice.

Publicly stated principles are but lines they mouth in a self-promoting morality play, a theatre in which they are happy to act provided that for the sake of those principles they are not required to give up anything they treasure.

There are many who will have been disappointed by Pavel Durov's rapid and for them unexpected capitulation. It appears however that life had handed to Pavel Durov a role whose moral scope was too large for him. He was either unprepared for it, or perhaps was altogether uninterested to take it on. On the moral stage, in contrast to posturing, performing credibly means to perform sacrificially, and that is infinitely more demanding than anything Durov seems to have done so far in the course of his life. It is a genre that calls for more than technical knowhow or business acumen. It demands a quality that is increasingly rare and precious, that in the bygone times used to be known and admired as - character.

In the course of the last two years Russia has "lost" several hundred thousand "Pavel Durovs" to the allurements that beckon from beyond its borders. Those nominal Russians were unprepared to even symbolically share in the sacrifices and discomforts of their compatriots in Russia proper or in Ukraine. Quantitatively and qualitatively however that demographic loss is being amply compensated by the influx of an even greater number of worthy new citizens. Having experienced over the course of their entire lives the illusory benefits that have held Russia's frivolous *jeunesse dorée* in thrall, their fervent commitment to Russia's culture and its values is now beyond doubt. Their children will embrace those values and they ultimately will inherit and embody the Russian spirit.

In contrast to the demographic cataclysm that is ravaging the collective West, this is a population replacement scheme that all who wish Russia well should look forward to and

welcome.

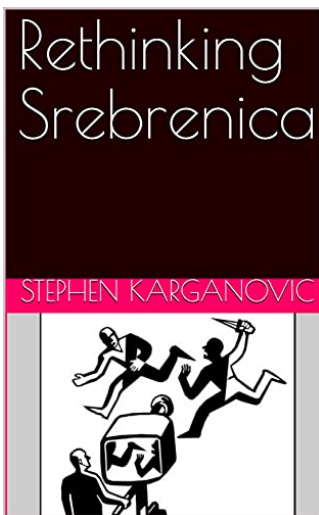
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Featured image [source](#)



Rethinking Srebrenica

By Stephen Karganovic

Rethinking Srebrenica examines the forensic evidence of the alleged Srebrenica “massacre” possessed by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague. Even though the ICTY created more than 3,500 autopsy reports, many of these autopsy reports were based on bone fragments, which do not represent complete bodies. An examination of the matching femur bones found reveals that there were only about 1,900 complete bodies that were exhumed. Of these, some 1,500 autopsy reports indicated a cause of death consistent with battlefield casualties. Only about 400 autopsy reports indicated execution as a cause of death, as revealed by ligatures and blindfolds. This forensic evidence does not warrant the conclusion of a genocide having taken place.

Karganovic examines the events that took place in Srebrenica in July 1995 in a wholistic manner instead of restricting it to a three-day event. The ten chapters cover:

- 1) Srebrenica: A Critical Overview;
- 2) Demilitarization of the UN Safe Zone of Srebrenica;
- 3) Genocide or Blowback?;

- 4) General Presentation and Interpretation of Srebrenica Forensic Data (Pattern of Injury Breakdown);
- 5) An Analysis of the Srebrenica Forensic Reports Prepared by the ICTY Prosecution Experts;
- 6) An Analysis of Muslim Column Losses Attributable to Minefields, Combat Activity, and Other Causes;
- 7) The Genocide Issue: Was there a Demonstrable Intent to Exterminate All Muslims?;
- 8) ICTY Radio Intercept Evidence;
- 9) The Balance Sheet; and
- 10) Srebrenica: Uses of the Narrative.

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