

# The Metaphysics to Our Present Global Anguish

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*James Jatras, a former US diplomat [poses](#) a highly pertinent question in his piece *Lenin Updated: Firstly, he says, President Trump meets with President Putin and appears to make some progress in easing bilateral tensions. “Immediately all hell breaks loose: Trump is called a traitor. The ‘sanctions bill from hell’ is introduced in the Senate, and Trump is forced onto the defensive”.**

Next, Senator Rand Paul goes to meet with Putin in Moscow, Jatras notes. Paul hands over a letter from the US President proposing moderate steps towards détente. Rand Paul then meets with, and invites Russian Senators to Washington, to continue the dialogue:

“Immediately all hell breaks loose. Paul is called a traitor. The state Department ‘finds’ the Russians guilty of using illegal chemical weapons (in UK) ... and imposes sanctions. Trump is forced even more on the defensive.”

Clearly, from the very outset, Trump has been “perceived by the globalist neo-liberal order as a mortal danger to the system which has enriched them” Jatras observes. The big question that Jatras poses in the wake of these events, is how could such collective hysteria have blossomed in to such visceral hostility, that parts of the ‘Anglo’ establishment are ready to intensify hostilities toward Russia – even to the point of risking “a catastrophic, uncontrollable [nuclear] conflict”. How is it that the élite’s passion ‘to save globalism’ is so completely overwhelming that it demands their risking human extinction? Jatras suggests that we are dealing here with hugely powerful psychic impulses.

Jatras answers by evoking the zeitgeist of Lenin, when, in 1915, he made his infamous turn towards civil war inside Russia. That is, a war versus ‘Russia’ – in and of itself – its history, its culture, its religion, and its intellectual and political legacy. With up to 10 million Russians left dead by his cleansing, Lenin said “I spit on Russia. [The slaughter is but] only one stage we have to pass through, on our way to world revolution [i.e. to his vision of a universal Communism].

Professor John Gray, writing in his book, *Black Mass*, notes that

“the world in which we find ourselves ... is littered with the debris of utopian projects which – though they were framed in secular terms that denied the truth of religion – were in fact, vehicles for religious myth”.

The Jacobin revolutionaries launched the Terror as a violent retribution for élite repression – inspired by Rousseau’s Enlightenment humanism; the Trotskyite Bolsheviks murdered millions in the name of reforming humanity through Scientific Empiricism; the Nazis did similar, in the name of pursuing ‘Scientific (Darwinian) Racism’.

All these utopian, (murderous) projects effectively flowed from a style of mechanical, single-track, thinking that had evolved in Europe, over the centuries, and which seated the unshakeable sense of one’s own certainty and conviction – in the West European thinker, at least.

These supposedly empirically-arrived-at certitudes – seated now in the human ego – triggered a re-awakening precisely to those early Judeo-Christian, apocalyptic notions: That history, somehow, was on a convergent course towards some human transformation, and an ‘End’, with fearful retribution for the corrupt, and a radically, redeemed, new world, for the elect. No longer (in today’s world), triggered through an act of God, but ‘engineered’ by the act of Enlightenment man.

World redemption from its state of corruption was to be brought into being through Enlightenment principles of rationality and science. Peace was expected to ensue, after the End Time.

These millenarian revolutionaries – exponents of the new Scientism, who hoped to force a shattering discontinuity in history (through which the flaws of human society would be excised from the body politic) – were, in the last resort, nothing other than secular representatives of the apocalyptic Judaic and Christian myth.

The American millenarian ‘myth’, then and now, was (and is), rooted in the fervent belief in the Manifest Destiny of the United States, ‘the New Jerusalem’, to represent humanity’s best hope for a utopian future. This belief in a special destiny has been reflected in a conviction that the United States must lead – or more properly, has the duty to coerce – mankind toward that future.

Some might argue, however, that early Enlightenment ‘liberal’ humanism, with its ‘good intentions’, has no connection to Jacobinism or Trotskyite Bolshevism. But, in practice, both are crucially similar: They are secular versions of progress towards a utopian, redemption of a flawed humanity: One strand aims to reclaim humanity through the revolutionary destruction of the irredeemable parts of society. And the other strand roots its redemption in a teleological process of ‘melting’ away cultural identity. It also seeks to weaken the sense of linkage through shared ‘blood’ and territory (place) – in order to create a tabula rasa on which a new homogenised non-national, cosmopolitan identity can be writ, that will be both peaceful and democratic.

The aim is a global, cosmopolitan society disembarrassed of religion, national culture and community, gender and social class. Processes of toleration that, formerly, were construed as essential to freedom have undergone an Orwellian metamorphosis to emerge as their antonyms: as instruments, rather, of repression. Any national leader standing against this project, any contrary national culture, or national pride displayed in a nation’s achievements, plainly constitutes an obstacle to this prospective universal realm – and must be destroyed. In other words, today’s millenarians may eschew the guillotine, but they are explicitly coercive – albeit, in a different manner – through the progressive ‘capture’ of

narrative, and of state institutions.

In short, a global space is being sought that would recognise only an international global humanity — much as the Trotskyites wanted.

So, how is it, precisely, that Russia and Mr Putin has come to constitute the antithesis to the utopian project, and the trigger to such fear and hysteria amongst the globalist élites?

It springs, I suggest, from a percolating awareness amongst western élites that formal (Latin) Judeo-Christian monotheism – which gave western Europe its insistence on singularity of meaning, its linear itinerary, and its partner ideology of secular millenarianism – both find themselves increasingly questioned, and in decline.

Henry Kissinger [says](#) the mistake the West (and NATO) is making “is to think that there is a sort of historic evolution that will march across Eurasia – and not to understand that somewhere on that march it will encounter something – very different to a Westphalian [western idea of a liberal democratic and market orientated state] entity.” It is time to relinquish ‘old pretenses’, Kissinger emphasizes – for, “we are in a very, very grave period for the world”.

No doubt linked to this alienation from both revealed religion, and its secular utopian counterpart, is the general collapse in the optimistic certitudes connected with the idea of linear ‘progress’ – in which many (particularly the young), no longer believe (seeing the evidence of the world about them).

But what really riles the globalists is the contemporary trend, manifested most particularly, by Russia, towards a pluralism which privileges one’s culture, history, religiosity and ties of blood, land and language – and which sees in this re-appropriation of traditional values, the path to the re-sovereignisation of a particular people. The Russian ‘Eurasian’ notion is one of different cultures, autonomous, and sovereign, which, at least implicitly, constitutes a rejection of the Latin theology of equality, and reductive universalism (i.e. achieved through Redemption.)

The idea rather, is of a grouping of ‘nations’, each reaching back to its primordial cultures and identities – i.e. Russia being ‘Russian’ in its own ‘Russian cultural way’ – and not permitting itself to be coerced into mimicking the westernisation impulse. What makes a wider grouping of Eurasian nations feasible is that cultural identities are complex and storied: It escapes the prevailing obsession to reduce every nation to a singularity in value, and to a singularity of ‘meaning’. The ground for collaboration and conversation thus widens beyond ‘the either-or’, to the differing strata of complex identities – and interests.

Why should this seem so ‘diabolical’ to the western global élites? Why all the hysteria? Well ... they ‘scent’ in Russian Eurasianism (and so-called populism, more generally) a stealth reversion to the old, pre-Socratic values: For the Ancients, as just one example, the very notion of ‘man’, in that way, did not exist. There were only men: Greeks, Romans, barbarians, Syrians, and so on. This stands in obvious opposition to universal, cosmopolitan ‘man’.

Once the Roman Empire took over Christianity as a ‘westernised’ dissident form of Judaism, neither Europe nor Christianity conformed any longer to their origins, or somehow to their own ‘natures’. Absolute monotheism, in its dualistic form, was profoundly foreign to the

European mind. Latin Christianity first tried (not very successfully) to repress the Ancient values, before deciding it was better to try to assimilate them into Christianity. Russian Orthodoxy however managed to retain its itinerary: whereas the Latin Church suffered multiple crises – not the least being that of the Enlightenment and the Protestant dissidence flooding across western Europe.

The fearful élites, in fact, are right: The disappearance in modernity of any external norm, beyond civic conformity, which might guide the individual in his or her life and actions, and the enforced eviction of the individual from any form of structure (social classes, Church, family, society and gender), has made a ‘turning back’ to what was always latent, if half forgotten, somehow inevitable.

It represents a ‘reaching back’ to an old ‘storehouse’ of values – a silent religiosity; a ‘turn back’ to being again ‘in, and of’ the world. A storehouse that has in fact remained unchanged (albeit clothed in Christianity), with its foundational myths, and notion of cosmic ‘order’ (maat) still swirling in the deeper levels of the collective unconscious. Of course, ‘the Ancient’ cannot be an ad integrum return. It cannot be the simple restoration of what once was. It has to be brought forward as if ‘youth’ come back again – the eternal return – out of our own decomposition.

Henri Corbin, the scholar of Islam, once noting a panel in Iran in which the shapes of vases of various shapes were cut out from wooden back panel of a cupboard, suggested that, as with these vases whose solid forms no longer existed, somehow the space that they once occupied still remains – if only as a void, marked by outline. So too, old notions and values somehow have left behind their outlines, too. And this, maybe, is what is driving the globalist élite to their medications: 500 years ago, the Enlightenment crushed the brief impulse from the Ancient world in Europe, known as the Renaissance. Now the shoe is on the other foot, and it is the world of today’s élites which is imploding. What had been imagined as defeated, beyond recovery, is cautiously arising out from our crumbled ruins. The wheel of time turns, and comes around, again. It may all fare badly – the mode of linear one-track thinking implanted in the West does have an inbuilt propensity towards totalitarianism. We shall see.

Just as then, when the tide of the Enlightenment bulldozed through old beliefs, hauling everything that was Delphic and unfathomable, out into the laser gaze of radical scepticism – causing terrible psychic tensions (more than 10,000 Europeans were burnt alive during the Great Witch hysteria) – so, today, we have a wave of still inchoate ‘otherness’ emerging from the deepest levels of human psyche to hurl itself onto the rocks of Enlightenment self-certainty. The tensions and the hysteria, follow in a similar way.

Its ‘return’ is driving men and woman literally mad – mad enough, even to risk a catastrophic war, rather than to relinquish the myth of America’s Manifest Destiny, or even to acknowledge the flaws to their radically disjunctive way of thinking about a world that must be brought to some global convergence.

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