

Theses about Russia

Alexander Volodarsky

18 November 2017

Certainly, Russia is not an eternal and timeless category. It is not a mystical center of evil, the successor of the Golden Horde, a product of breeding and degeneration, etc. We drop all the standard Russophobic stamps. We consider the Russian Federation in the current temporary and political context like a huge state with a low population density, an authoritarian regime, which in the current form is built by law enforcers. The Russian bourgeoisie dependence on the large state officials. In this text we will only superficially go into the experience of the USSR and the Russian Empire — my goal is not historical research proving the similarity and continuity of different «Russia», we can accept this thesis on faith or not, the final conclusions should not depend on it.

I want to expressly declare that Russia belongs to Russian nationalism, not «Russia's». Rather, nationalism belongs to Russia, it really aims to construct not a Russian, but a multi-ethnic and multicultural nation of Russia, but Russian chauvinism is the glue that keeps this construct together. Russia is a colonial empire, a kind of a XIX century relic, but there are no seas between metropolis and the colonies. Until recently, this particular feature was the guarantee of its territorial integrity in many ways. Economic and cultural ties were stronger than, for example, between Britain and India, geographical proximity is facilitated by direct police and military control. It allows Russia to retain its land effectively.

Russian imperial nationalists almost literally reproduce the racist myth of the «white man's burden». They see themselves as noble colonizers who have brought (and continued to carry) the light of civilization to the unreasonable and savage people.

Of course, there are no formal differences between the «Russian masters» and «native servants» before the law. But this equality is conditional, it continues only as long as the representatives of «national minorities» behave in accordance with the rules and norms dictated by the «titular nation». Till the first racist cop, who will look at not even the behavior, but the slant of the eyes. A few years ago there was a prime example, when the Yakut, Russian citizen, who did not speak Russian, couldn't get a passport, and was identified as an illegal migrant and was almost deported. Russia differs in this from another «multinational state».

Despite the fact that Ukraine is a multinational and multicultural state, the situation when two citizens of the country do not know each other's languages and can't communicate is almost impossible. Economic interests are also sufficiently cohesive: that the Donbas without Ukraine or Ukraine without the Donbass is not very comfortable, the regions depend on each other. Russia

is the state of a multitude of people and cultures, which sometimes have no common ground, and they are held together by the «civilizing» mission of the Russians and the financial interests of the big capitalists associated with the state from the metropolis, standing exclusively above them.

Soviet nationalism after the 1940's, after Stalin's «return to patriotism», was also based on a variety of Russian Great Power Chauvinism. He builds a people's hierarchy, at the top of which there are «brothers-Slavs» under the leadership of the elder Russian brother. That is why, by the way, any using of «fraternal peoples» is deeply reactionary. It's surprising when the leftists use it. National cultures in modern Russia (as well as in the USSR) can be strongly encouraged at their local level, but at the state level they are still rigidly inscribed in the hierarchy. No Russian «melting pot» exists — in this boiler everyone has their «layer». Peoples take their places and rarely mix.

Therefore, in a polemic context it is perfectly correct to talk about «Russian government», «Russian army» and «Russian invasion of Ukraine», not «Russia's»: it is Russian chauvinism who leads Chechens, Buryats, Yakuts to slaughter.

The metropolis keeps its colonies not only through direct violence. As the experience of the Chechen wars shows — this bloody path is very expensive and inefficient. Practice has shown that it is much more profitable to buy local elites, generously provide them with money and provide complete freedom of action. They set the «rights» in the territory under their control. With corruption and the death penalty, but with complete loyalty to Moscow. Almighty regional princes (ideal example of which is president of Chechen republic Ramzan Kadyrov) wallow in money and enjoy the benefits. There are examples of clashes between «Chechen police» and police and even Russian special services. And the last-mentioned always lose — in most cases Kadyrov's boys got away with it.

At the same time, ordinary Chechens, like the inhabitants of other «national» regions, are immediately under double oppression: their lack of rights is determined by the racism of the Russian chauvinist center and the arbitrariness of local regional elites who have carte blanche from Moscow, are practically omnipotent on their territory.

The principle vertical in Russia is not the power of a «strong center» over «weak regions». This is the power of a «strong center» over «strong regions», and this is important to understand when we get down to the next topic — the inevitable disintegration of Russia.

When I write about the inevitability and necessity of the disintegration of Russia, I do not mean the mechanical division of the country into parts by the occupation forces of NATO, the construction of the «Russian Wall», which would divide the country into «zones of influence». When I write about the disintegration of Russia, I mean a natural process that will inevitably follow after a strong central government restraining the regions by bribery or intimidation is eliminated. Elimination of Russia as a single state is not the goal, but an unavoidable consequence of the liquidation of authoritarian power, because only authoritarian power can restrain centrifugal forces.

Again, let's back to the Chechnya example.

Imagine that the Russian left came to power in the course of the social revolution. How would the left-wing government plan to explain to Ramzan Akhmatovich that a new time has come, and he should stop walking in golden slippers, stop eating human liver for breakfast and, in general, we need to transfer power into the hands of ordinary Chechen workers? Of course, someone can tell Ramzan Akhmatovich about decentralization and democracy, and if this «someone» is

lucky, he will die his death, die of laughter from biting his own tongue. I will be told that the revolutionaries will not speak to the satrap, but will speak to the Chechen workers directly. By the way, how many Chechens are there in the left organizations? Are there people who know the Chechen language among the Russian leftists? And the languages of other peoples of Russia? Knowledge of the language, of course, does not guarantee success in agitation, but is the minimum standard for it.

So, in Russia there are more than 80 regions, and not all these regions are interested in submitting to the results of the coup in Moscow. The Vertical of Power in Russia works only as long as it is generously «lubricated» with blood and money. After all, why should Siberia, with its minerals, feed Moscow and obey its orders? What is the reason to give income from oil and gas to an insatiable center, if you can sell them on your own terms? There is still a huge territory, most of which is empty. And there is China, which can pay generously to use this territory.

The only practical recipe for retaining the «territorial unity» that our hypothetical revolutionaries can offer is Boris Eltsin's recipe. This is a new war, a war for the retention of colonies. And since Chechnya is not the only problem region, this war will be total, and Ukrainian ATO against this background will seem an easy walk. The talk about the territorial integrity of Russia, which exists today, will turn into unprecedented war crimes tomorrow. A Russian man from an organization that consists predominantly of Russian men can talk as much as he likes about overcoming ethnic hatred, but in his performance this will be nothing more than another mask of civilizing chauvinism, another «Great Russia welds a nation».

Undoubtedly, Russia could maintain conditional integrity on the basis of unified class interests rather than national interests (although at that time it could hardly be called «Russia», and in general «state», rather «federation of communes»). Only, a prerequisite for the proletariat to be able to recognize and articulate its fundamental interest is, again, the collapse of the regime, that is brutally suppressing the workers' speeches and serious attempts of the organization.

And the collapse of the regime will automatically be a trigger the mechanism that splits the state, and the more rapid and painless this split is, the greater the chances for the development of class organizations in some regions.

The Russian Federation can be compared to a terminally ill patient who is connected to a life support system. This apparatus is a repressive authoritarian state. If you turn it off — it will die, if you do not turn it off — it will be possible to delay the inevitable for up to several weeks, months and even years, but many others will die.

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Alexander Volodarsky
Theses about Russia
18 November 2017

Retrieved on 20th February 2022 from www.nihilist.li

theanarchistlibrary.org