

WE REALLY NEED TO TALK ABOUT RUSSIA

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It is easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled.¹
Mark Twain

Topics (linked to paragraphs):

Why talk about Russia?

The demonization of Russia

Just who is Vladimir Putin?

Our Historical Epoch



Before we even start, there is [a short video](#) that will set the tone for what is to follow in these two articles...

Ready? This paper is largely in response to the alarmingly negative and dangerous media coverage in recent years about Russia and her people, both in mainstream and social media. It is a long piece, therefore in two parts, and is meant to be read and digested over time. Although what is addressed herein is applicable to our society in general, it leans toward readers who have more of a grounding in esoteric thought, and who are more liberal in their thinking. What we are about to examine here is a topic that many readers will likely find at odds with their current beliefs about Russia, even quite confronting, especially if one's main sources of information about that nation are the mainstream media outlets (MSM) in [the West](#). In fact, for readers in the US, UK and Australia, what follows will sound like pure Russian propaganda, and I would be labeled a 'Putin apologist', 'Putin puppet' or 'Russian troll', or that I have been 'turned' by or have 'bought into' Russian propaganda. People can think what they like. I can already hear the comments. But, to engage in such negativity is destructive as well as being stifling to any constructive discourse. I have sought in my mind a clear, informed, rational understanding about Russia, especially in the context of historical development and our present changing world. This paper is my sharing of the results of my own investigations about that land, her people and her present government. There are numerous links to articles, paper, videos and so forth for reference, and these will take time to wade through, if one is inclined to do so.

It has taken some time for me to undo my own past conditioning, much of which was so ingrained as to be subconscious, knee-jerk and patriotic, from film, conversations, negative media coverage and so forth, about Russia and her people. That conditioning constitutes what is called a powerful 'glamour' in the Alice Bailey books. That conditioning was foisted on me and Americans in general from a very early age. In fact, I would say that there are very few Americans alive today who have not been steeped in anti-Russian propaganda and negative portrayals of Russians. However, independent sources – people who know Russia, have interacted with Russians and have traveled and lived there – present a very different picture of Russia and Russians than what we are told.

When we examine Russia in light of these other sources it becomes clear that we in the West have been lied to and deliberately misinformed by supposed ‘experts’ in many instances and the MSM, about Russia, Putin and their history with the West. In the West, Russia is seen in a less than favorable light these days, to put it lightly. Putin is seen as the ultimate villain. But ‘these days’, as it turns out, actually go back a long way and have been hammered into the public opinion of primarily Western nations for many decades. Are such opinions justified, though, and backed up by facts? How much do we really know about Russia in the West? And, do we really need or want to know? The latter question is more important, more confronting and more to point.

Why talk about Russia? We could cite many reasons for why an open, informed and considered conversation about that vast land, its politics and its people is needed by the Western public, and far fewer reasons as to why we should not. But if for no other reason, the main need for dialog with Russia right now rests in the old doctrine of MAD – mutually assured destruction – due to the fact that the Russian nuclear arsenal matches that of the US, plus the fact that [Russian nuclear delivery and defense systems now outclass those of the West](#) (see also [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). This is aggravated by the hubristic and confrontational attitude of many Western democracies. Washington [pundits dismiss Russian claims](#) to weapon superiority, but [the facts say otherwise](#). To put the matter bluntly, if we fail to talk with and about Russia, as the new Cold War from Washington is leaning, the possibility of accidents and misjudgments that could lead to even a limited nuclear confrontation is high, and that would bode disastrously for the entire planet. As it turns out, the Washington elites overestimate or overstate their own strategic abilities and likewise underestimate those of Russia, downplaying the latter to the American public, and that sort of myopathy is passed on without filter. They also [overestimate America’s continued primary influence on the world stage](#). If Russian capabilities are as weak or non-existent as the pundits say, the why the heightened rhetoric? This must stop, or we are about to have some very sobering experiences due to Washington’s hubris and misjudgment.

Aside from the concerns of terrible conflicts, though, there is a far more important and humanistic reason for understanding and dialog with Russia, and it is stated most clearly in the following quote:

- ...there are three great fusing energies or vital centres present upon our planet:
- a. Russia, fusing and blending eastern Europe and western and northern Asia. [in the past, via the USSR, but now increasingly through economic and strategic cooperation]
 - b. The United States (and later South America), fusing and blending central and western Europe and the entire western hemisphere. [via the Marshall Plan, the EU and NATO]
 - c. The British Empire, fusing and blending races and men throughout the entire world. [via the Commonwealth]

In the hands of these nations lies the destiny of the planet. These are the three major world blocs, from *the consciousness angle* and from the angle of world synthesis. Other and lesser nations will participate in the process *with full independence and cooperation, voluntarily and through the perfecting of their national life in the interests of the whole of humanity and through the desire to express and preserve their soul integrity and their purified national purpose* (which purification is now going on). The keynote, however, of human living will be struck by Russia, Great Britain and the United States — not because of their power, their historical past and their material resources or territorial extent, but because they are in a position to fuse and blend the many types, because they are far-visioned in their world purpose, because they are not basically selfish in their intent, and because the government of the peoples reaches down into the depths of each nation and is fundamentally *for the people...*²

(Bolding, brackets and italics added for emphasis.) The above being said, we could argue about the extent to which we have government for the people in those three nations, the selfishness or not of their governments and special interests and all, but we will save that for another time. However, in that regard, the United States, for all its talk of freedom and “government of the people, by the people, for the people” as written in their constitution, has a major point of reckoning coming, and within the next few years. That reckoning is being self-induced through government, [social and economic policy](#), but may be triggered by external forces or events. However off point that might seem here, it is central as to why we have such a poor dialog with Russia at the moment. And because the US and UK are so closely connected in so many ways, we see the same sorts of attitudes reflected in the UK and throughout the extent of the Commonwealth of Nations. It is not by accident, and it has been vigorously pursued by interests behind the scenes, unelected, very well-financed and working outside the laws of their respective lands to a large extent since the end of WWII, when the preceding quote was written. This is well documented, as we will see. However, before we get to the many reasons why this is taking place, it would be helpful to establish a basis from which we can begin a more fruitful and peaceful dialog with the Russian Federation, and that lies in our common humanity. We are not so different as to our citizenry, as it turns out.

Russia is a vast land, comprising upwards of 1/7th of the world’s land mass, encompassing 11 time zones, 7 climate zones and numerous land forms, including deserts in the south, the world’s largest forested areas to the north (the “lungs of Europe”), vast arctic areas, 25% of the world’s fresh water, 10% of the world’s arable land, some of the world’s largest lakes, and enormous natural resources. It holds the world’s largest reserves of natural gas and one of the largest reserves of oil. It is thus a key player in the energy market, which also makes it a target of competition from the US and Gulf states on the Arabian Peninsula. Russia has a population of close to 150 million, with close to 75% of them living in Europe, which comprises only 25% of the nation’s land mass. Thus, the largest number of Russians are European in origin, with almost 80% being ethnic Russians. There are 180 ethnic groups in Russia, with the next-largest group being ethnic Ukrainians, followed by Tatars. The Tatars live primarily in southeastern Europe and southwest Asia, with a large number in Crimea.

There is another point to keep in mind as we go along, though: The largest part of Russia is essentially uninhabited, with 2 people or less for every square kilometer, which is staggering if we think about it. When we talk about Russia, then, what we are really discussing and where the West really has a problem, is with European Russia. More to the point, European Russia is *eastern* European, and many of the prejudices and stereotypes about Eastern Europeans are played upon in Western Europe, the US, Australia and Western media in general. ([here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) In the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski, a native Pole and one of America’s favorite Russophobes:

“Given that Russia’s demographic center of gravity is in Europe, and that its culture is derived from Byzantine Christendom, Russia can be legitimately seen as the Eastern extremity of Europe, in both geopolitical and cultural terms.”³

European nations have tried to invade and conquer European Russia [several times](#) in the past 300 years. Each attempt resulted in a decisive Russian victory and re-wrote the boundaries of Europe. The last time was with [Operation Barbarossa](#) by Nazi Germany and allied Axis nations. The USSR faced 148 German divisions – 80% of the German Army – in what was the largest military operation in history, and eventually prevailed, as we know from history. It was largely the Russians, not the West, who defeated the Nazis. But the cost to the USSR was terrible, with the loss of 20 – 27 million people in WWII, or [about 14% of the total population](#) of the USSR. This is mentioned for context, as it is still fresh in the memory of Russians, and stands as one of the main reasons why they occupied Eastern Europe after WWII, and is another major reason why Russians view the NATO encroachment to their borders with due suspicion and alarm. So, why all the suspicion about

Russia, given that the West cannot seem to put the shoe on the other foot in understanding that country, her government and her peoples?

The demonization of Russia: The institutionalized demonization of Russia goes back to the end of WWII and the likes of [James Burnham](#), an ex-[Trotskyite](#) and American conservative philosopher and political theorist. He wrote a seminal book, [The Managerial Revolution](#), published in 1941, in which he outlined and advocated for, “[an expert, technocratic oligarchy](#)” to take the reins of power in government – in short, a battle plan for US hegemony and global empire. That technocratic oligarchy forms the basis of US and EU government today. His work is echoed in the neocons that have found power once again in the US, and preceded them by a quarter of a century. But, for this elite technocratic structure to be effective, it needed a permanent enemy, which by design required a concerted propaganda campaign to keep the idea of that permanent enemy alive *for generations*. The USSR fit the bill to a T. Burnham’s work was seized upon by [Frank Wisner](#) of the OSS and later of the CIA, who recognized the opportunity in such a model for constructing a hedge against [Stalinism](#), which was the dominant political structure in the USSR at the time. Wisner’s work additionally gave rise to a pseudo-liberalism, which we see in what is now called the ‘liberal left’ in the US, but which is actually repressive of any true freedom of thought. Wisner’s campaign has been quite effective, and it was instituted in 1947, with the creation of the CIA, and seeded throughout Europe and the Middle East thereafter. Stalin died in 1953, as did Stalinism shortly after, but the stigma lived on in the demonization of the USSR, and later the Russian Federation, kept alive by the programs developed in the CIA – from “[Wisner’s Wurlitzer](#)”, as it was known in the agency, to [Operation Mockingbird](#), to the [manipulation of Hollywood](#), and [lately through social media](#). Now, much of that sort of work is done through the [NGOs](#), such as the [NED](#). Just considering this paragraph alone gives one cause to question what we hear in the MSM and from government sources about Russia. And then, there is this:

- The current Russian state is not the USSR.

The USSR was a communist, totalitarian state which openly advocated revolution and the devolution of the Western emphasis on capitalism, whereas the Russian Federation has sought from the beginning to integrate itself with the West in some fashion, but has been knocked back at every turn. As for its politics, the Russian Federation is classed now as a ‘[hybrid regime](#)’ – neither a full democracy nor a fully authoritarian regime, depending on which source one checks. It is also not a communist state, but rather has a [mixed economy](#), with part state control and part neo-liberal economics. [British and American sources tend to class Russia as authoritarian](#), whereas more scientific sources cite it as being hybrid. Many Americans still think Russia is a communist state. It is a state in transition out of the old communist, totalitarian USSR model. It also has a powerful oligarchy, put in place during the Yeltsin years under [the American plan of ‘shock therapy’](#) after the collapse of the USSR. What the Russians actually had was [the shock without the therapy](#). It will be of interest to American readers, too, that due to recent developments in American politics, the US has been reclassified as a ‘[flawed democracy](#)’, on par with Italy, which tends to take the gloss off the idea of the US being the “[shining city upon a hill](#)”. So, all this leads us to look at what we hear in the MSM about Russia and American exceptionalism, and then to see if there is any truth in it. Hopefully, this will lead in turn to a more considered and informed approach when we talk about a nation that is one of the three main nations shaping the world’s destiny, and with whom we should be at least on speaking terms.

Just who is Vladimir Putin? What we hear: Vladimir Putin is a corrupt, authoritarian leader – [a thug](#).

The facts: Russians would most heartily disagree. They gripe about him all the time, but we gripe about our leaders, too. That doesn’t mean they want to see him leave office. This portrayal as villain is a very typical propaganda meme that is employed in order to garner

support against anyone who does not toe the line with another nation's expectations. It has been called "[atrocious propaganda](#)". Putin is constantly portrayed in this sort of light in the West. People who know and who have had business and personal dealings with Putin tell [a very different story](#) than the ones we hear.

To start, Putin came to power almost by accident in 2000 at the end of the Yeltsin years. Russia had lost its sovereignty after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Putin is a patriot, and [his mission](#) when he came to office was to protect the sovereignty of the Russian nation, to make the country whole again at home, to rescue its people and to protect its defenses. It is still his guiding principle. And, judged in the context of Russia and Russian history, he has done quite well. One of the biggest mistakes we make in judging leaders from other nations is to take them out of the context of their home nations and to try and conform them to our views. When it comes to Russia, we just do not understand this in the West. Putin is popular in Russia because Russians feel that he has done right by them. He has his faults, like any leader, but much of what we hear about him is negative, and for one main reason: He stood up to the West and called things as he saw them. Apparently, that just cannot be allowed. The man must therefore be demonized like his nation.

Another view: Rather than focusing on who we think Putin is, though, we may want to consider the following points, from [a recent talk by Prof. Stephen F. Cohen](#), Russian scholar. Regarding Putin:

1. "He is not the man who de-democratized Russia (Yeltsin and the White House did)
2. He is not the leader who created corruption and kleptocracy in Russia (Yeltsin and the White House did)
3. He is not a criminal leader who ordered the murder of opponents or journalists (no evidence)
4. He did not order the hacking of the DNC servers (no evidence)
5. He was not anti-US or anti-West from the get-go (Putin changed over time)
6. He is not a neo-Soviet leader (he is very critical of Lenin and Stalin)
7. He is not an aggressive foreign policy leader (he has been a reactive leader)
8. He is not somehow defined by his years at the KGB.

Professor Cohen ended his talk by suggesting a few things which might form a part of a future honest biography:

As a young and inexperienced leader placed at the helm of a collapsing state:

1. He rebuilt, stabilized and modernized Russia in a way to prevent future collapses
2. He had to restore the "vertical" of power: "managed democracy" (i.e. restored order)
3. He needed a consensual history patching up Czarist, Soviet and post-Soviet eras without imposing one, single, version of history
4. He needed Western support to modernize the Russian economy
5. He wanted Russia to be a great power, but not a super-power
6. He never favored iron-curtain isolationism; he is an internationalist (more European than 90% of Russians, at least in the beginning).

The key thesis is this: Putin began as a pro-Western, European leader and with time he realigned himself with a much more traditional, Russian worldview. He is more in line with Russian voters today."

So, before we go into the main points that are constantly harped on in the Western press, there is one more point to examine, from the Russian view, and keeping the preceding points in mind.

Our Historical Epoch: To summarize all the above and put it in context, we have the following statement by Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, [from a recent interview](#):

“...we are in the post-West world order, but this order is being shaped and it will take a long time. It is a historical epoch, if you want. Certainly, after five or so centuries of domination of the collective West, as it were, it is not very easy to adjust to new realities that there are other powerhouses economically, financially and politically, China, India, Brazil. African countries are going to be very much on the rise, as soon as they resolve at least some of the conflicts, which are there on the continent. Well, Russia certainly would like to be an independent world player. Independent in the sense that we do not want to violate any international law and norms, but the decisions, which we would be taking on the basis of international law, would not be influenced by pressure, money, sanctions, threats or anything else...It is not Russia that is shaping this world order, it is history. It is the development itself. You cannot really hope to contain these new powerful, economically and financially, countries. You cannot really ignore their role in world trade and world economy. Attempts are being made to slow down this process by new tariffs, new sanctions for good or bad reasons in violation of the WTO principles and so on. But I think it is a logical reaction: trying to slow down something, which is objective and does not depend on any single administration in any country.”

Russia is [actually in a good position at the moment](#), in spite of and actually because of the Western sanctions. And, with the proper attention of the government, barring any catastrophes, will likely see the Russian public even better off over the coming years, given her present pace of development. We cannot expect Russia to conform to our Western European and North American ideas of freedom and democracy. Her place in the emerging world order is primarily with the East, and the major domestic developments we will see there in the next years lie in her eastern regions. Those developments will add considerably to Russia's wealth, should raise the standard of living for most if not all Russians, as well as her world standing. The events of recent decades have drawn out the best of Russia's Leo personality, in the respect that those events have caused Russia to re-examine herself and her motives, to become more self-sufficient, to show self-discipline, to show leadership instead of brinkmanship (it is now Washington and the MSM that exhibits such fiery rhetoric), and a rejection of everything that goes against her development. Such events have also begun to draw out the Russian soul, which seeks to live up to its motto, “I link two ways”⁴, which promotes the more Uranian aspects of innovation, of restoring order, of paving a way toward a more spiritual expression and so forth.

In closing this section, then, the descendants, or perhaps maintainers, of ‘Wisner's Wurlitzer’ – the likes of the [Washington Post](#), the [New York Times](#), the [Guardian](#), the [New York Magazine](#), even the [Daily Beast](#), *et al* – continue to churn out Wisner's baleful tunes about the Russian menace to Western society, the darkness and backwardness of Russian society and her intransigence and wiliness, while failing to investigate neither the real threats to Western life (which are internal) nor the truth about Russian society. There is far more to the Russo-phobia than what we are told in the daily news. The world is indeed changing, and Russia is playing a key role in that, obviously much to the chagrin of the Western establishment. New economic models are emerging, which is where the real outside ‘threat’ is. New power and economic blocs are taking shape. The East is rising in prominence and challenging our Western modes of thought and beliefs. This is unavoidable, even perhaps to be welcomed in many instances. For all of our hand-wringing and unjustified fear, what does it profit us? More to the point, who does it profit? Our current attitudes as expressed in the MSM and many members of the Washington establishment toward Russia are on the whole [unreasoned, ill-informed and downright reckless](#).⁵

The West's hatred and mistrust of Russia runs deep. It will take time to change that view. It will take interacting with Russia on a more level playing field and more and more people willing to confront their own biases and question what we are told, approaching a dialog with the people in that vast land on an equal basis. It will also take interacting with Russians on a personal basis

increasingly over time. When we begin to see that we have been manipulated to see Russia as a threat in order to maintain our present economic system and power, then things will begin to change for the better. The [world's view of Russia is improving](#), whereas views of the US are worsening internationally. If events continue at their present rate and trends, Russia will equal the US as being seen favorably in the eyes of the international community in a few short years. What will that mean for the US? For Europe? The [current administration's policies and attitudes are hastening that changing world view](#). Just as the Soviet Union found in the lead-up to its collapse, our biggest problems in the West are internal, not based in some mysterious, dark land across the ocean or continent. It is time to stop focusing on 'the other' as to our problems and instead roll up our sleeves and get to work cleaning up our own back yards. We deserve to hear the truth. Russia is a big land and the few Russians I have met are no different from the rest of us. Russia and Russians are here to stay, and they are being increasingly accepted on the world stage as fair partners. We in the West ignore this to our detriment and need to re-think our views of that nation.

I will end with a personal anecdote. As an American, I was also heavily influenced about Italian culture via the media, and Americans frequently made fun of Italians – speaking with the hands, endless jokes about pizza, spaghetti, *goombas*, the Mafia and so forth. The Mafia is supposed to be endemic, one has to be careful of pickpockets, you have to bribe everyone to get anything done...most people reading this would have had some experience along those lines. When I first arrived in Italy, I learned very quickly that most of these characterizations/stereotypes were simply untrue. Some of the corruption, crime and so forth does take place, but it tends to be regional. Italians do not eat pasta and pizza at every meal, although we do love it here, and it is a fine art. There *is* an Italian sign language, but it is far more involved than what we are shown in America, and Italians can be quite 'creative' when it comes to driving rules. But that is about where the stereotypes stop. Italians on the whole are very warm and welcoming once they get to know you and you quickly become one of the family – in the good sense. Americans feel the same toward Italians once they get to know them. Why should Russians be any different? I'll give you a hint: They are actually quite warm-hearted.

END Part I

In Part II, specific gripes about Russia and if they hold water.

Blessings,
Malvin
17 Jul 18

Additional/optional views on Russia and Russian culture:

(I don't necessarily agree with all views expressed by these sites, but they are worth a look.)

Asia Times: <http://www.atimes.com/>

Information Agency of Greater Russia: (machine translate) <https://novorosinform.org/>

Intellinews: <http://www.intellinews.com/>

Russia Insider: <https://russia-insider.com/en>

Russia Today (RT): <https://www.youtube.com/user/RussiaToday>

Russian Market: <http://www.russianmarket.org/>

The Saker (Andrei Raevsky's blog): <https://thesaker.is/>

The Real News: <https://therealnews.com/stories/growing-up-in-the-ussr-rai-with-a-buzgalin-1-12>

Unz Review: <https://www.unz.com/>

Vesti News: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCa8MaD6gQscto_Nq1i49iew

¹ A misquote of Mark Twain. The original quote is: "How easy it is to make people believe a lie, and [how] hard it is to undo that work again!" From Autobiography of Mark Twain Vol II, p. 302

² Bailey, Alice A., *The Destiny of the Nations*, p. 105, Lucis Publishing Co., NY

³ *Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Documents, data and Analysis.* Zbigniew Brzezinski, Paige Sullivan. The Center for Strategic and International Studies, M.E. Sharpe, NY, London, 1997, p. 4.

⁴ Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations* p. 61

⁵ Especially starting at 2:45