

Russophobia is racism – Just like anti-Semitism

by Guy Mettan,* Geneva



Guy Mettan
(Picture ma)

It was to be expected that the 80th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany on 8 and 9 May this year would give rise to a wave of Russophobic hate speech against Russians and Russia. The most blatant insults were avoided, because it was difficult to spit on the 27 million dead that the Soviet

Union sacrificed to liberate Europe from Nazism.

But everything was done to trivialise them, push them aside and denigrate the commemorations on 9 May in Red Square by rewriting history to exaggerate the role of the Western Allies at the expense of others, especially Russia and China. This operation of cultural devaluation and historical revisionism is typical of the pathological Russophobia currently afflicting the European elites.

This hostility towards Russia has by no means subsided with the start of peace talks between Russians and Ukrainians in Istanbul but has even grown.

One might think that this behaviour was caused by the war and “Russian aggression”. But that is not even true. In a book published in 2015 and translated into eight languages, including Italian,¹ I showed that hatred of Russia, like hatred of Jews, has religious roots and dates back to the schism between Catholic and Orthodox Christianity, which began in the 9th and 10th centuries and led to the break in 1054.

From that point on, and with the Crusades accelerating the hatred, the West – which wanted to build a Roman-Germanic empire against the Eastern Roman Empire by promoting separation from the other Christian patriarchs – developed its aversion to the Christian Orthodox and Muslim East.

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Tolg Monastery of the “Presentation of the Virgin Mary” on the Volga River near Yaroslavl, founded in 1314 with fortifications dating from the 17th century. Since 1987, it is reassigned as a convent. (Picture jpv)

After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, this anti-Orthodox hatred was directed against Russia, which saw itself as the heir to Byzantium. The writings of Roman theologians and propagandists reveal the same three themes that are still relevant today: Russia is

1. a land of subhumans and barbarians,
2. ruled by bloodthirsty tyrants,
3. who have made it their mission to conquer

Europe and subjugate its innocent inhabitants. In modern times, the France of *Louis XV* and later *Napoleon* took up this propaganda and created a forged document, a “fake”, the so-called pseudo-testament of Peter the Great, in which the founder of modern Russia is said to have called on his successors to conquer Europe. Napoleon used it in 1812 to justify his invasion of Russia. But after 1815, when the British and Russians had defeated Napoleon, this forgery was translated into English and published in London, where it served as the basis for the propaganda that the British imperialists developed against their former Russian ally in order to conquer Crimea in 1853 and, throughout the 19th century, to unfold what history has come to know as *the Great Game* against the Russian Empire in Central Asia.

At the end of the 19th century, Russophobia then migrated to Germany, where it was used to justify colonial expansion in Russia (and in Ukraine, which had been Russian since 1654), the famous “Drang nach Osten” (Drive to the

East), which *Hitler* took up again in 1933. In 1945, when the Soviet Russians and the Americans had cooperated well during the war, Russophobia finally migrated to the United States, where, under the guise of anti-communism, it became one of the driving forces of the Cold War.

The confrontation was fierce, albeit not military. Logically, it should have disappeared with the fall of communism in Russia. But this was not the case, and Russophobia flourished again with *Putin's* rise to power, even though he had offered his help to President *Bush* after the attacks of 11 September 2001 and allowed the Americans to set up bases in Central Asia to attack Afghanistan.

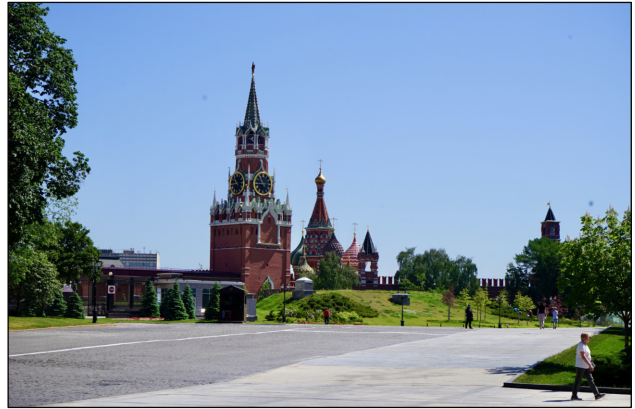
The rest is well known: Despite countless warnings, offers of negotiation and signed agreements such as Minsk II, the West ignored Russia's concerns and demands and financed the most Russophobic fringe groups of Ukrainian civil society by organising colour revolutions there in 2004 and 2014.

Russophobia is a form of racism that is almost as old as anti-Semitism and has the same religious roots. It also has the same catastrophic consequences for the populations that have fallen and continue to fall victim to it.

The Holocaust was a crime unparalleled in history. But what about the 17 million Soviet civilians murdered by the Nazis? In purely quantitative terms, they are three times as numerous as the victims of the Holocaust. Was their suffering any less when they were the first to be "tested" by the Nazi death machine? And what about the millions of widows, orphans, brothers and sisters, and war wounded who survived this horror?

In the thoughts and writings of Hitler, who repeatedly referred to his victims as "Jewish-Bolsheviks", Slavs were no better than Jews. We don't want to remember this, but it is the sad truth.

And in a way, Russophobia is a worse form of racism than anti-Semitism, as it is not recognised today as a heinous act and continues to be practised in the highest circles of European politics and journalism. Censorship, cultural boycotts, cancellations of authors, contempt, historical revisionism, discrimination, economic



Spasskaya Tower of the Kremlin in Moscow. The Kremlin walls and towers are among the oldest structures in the city. The entire complex was built in the 15th century by Italian architects. (Picture jpg)

sanctions and trade boycotts, hunting down bank accounts and demonising everything Russian are practices that are in no way inferior to those used by the Nazis against the Jews in the 1930s. In Ukraine, even the bodies of Soviet soldiers who fought against Nazism are being exhumed.

And this is happening today without any court, any law or any non-governmental organisation concerned with "human rights" raising the issue. As in the 1930s, this hatred is omnipresent: it is spread throughout all social classes, and even more so in the leadership circles of politics, the media, the churches and the army, as if it were something normal, everyday, self-evident.

You can banish a Russian, deprive him of his rights, insult him, drag him through the mud, without this causing the slightest scandal in a Europe that considers itself a model of civilisation.

History will judge those responsible for the war in Ukraine, just as it will judge the crimes committed in Palestine with the complicity of our government representatives. But it will also judge harshly those who have used and abused Russophobia to maintain the state of war and delay the restoration of genuine peace in Europe for as long as possible.

This text was first published by the Italian online daily newspaper *Pluralia.com*.

¹ "Creating Russophobia", Clarity Press, USA, 2017.

"Russie-Occident. Une guerre de mille ans", Delga 2024 (3rd edition).