

Alpha Dog Can't Save Russia

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Every failed revolution is followed by a serious repercussion. Considering that the current "White Revolution" is bound to fail, turmoil awaits this country after Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is inaugurated as president in May. And it will be a powerful repercussion, like the one that followed the failed revolution of 1905.

There are a variety of ways to give legitimacy to a ruling regime. In many monarchies, the leader is considered to be "anointed by God" with a mandate from heaven. That approach obviously won't work in Russia.

Then there is the totalitarian Communist model: "We are building a new world, and anyone who opposes us is an evil imperialist and a capitalist." This won't work either. Putin isn't building a new world. The only thing he is building are new palaces.

Democracies give legitimacy to their rulers by holding free and fair elections. But the Putin regime is decidedly anti-democratic. The real message of pro-Putin rallies is: "We will not allow any elections to determine who will rule Russia. Only Putin himself should make that decision."

That leaves only the physiological reasoning of claiming legitimacy: "I'm strong, and therefore I'm in power. I'm in power, and therefore I am strong." This is the alpha-male model in its purest form. This model defined the rule of many dictators, such as former Italian leader Benito Mussolini, former Haitian President Jean-Claude Duvalier and former Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos as well as others.

But it would be wrong to call this model fascism because it predates fascism by 7 million years. This model, which is the only form of government that is a mixture of humans and chimpanzees, would be more accurately called "alpha-ism."

The most fundamental difference is that modernization was the driving force of fascism. Fascism hoped to conquer open society through war and attain impressive technical achievements during the preparations for that war. Wartime posters of Mussolini surrounded by airplanes in flight, menacing destroyers and other military hardware illustrated the main message the authorities wanted to convey: The Duce was better able to prepare the country for the impending war than his own people were.

Nashism — the nationalistic ideology of the pro-Kremlin youth group Nashi — is an imitation of that fascist call to modernization and war. It is the ideology of any society that functions as a raw materials appendage.

Russia can exist as long as it continues to export raw materials to developed countries and buy consumer goods from them in return. It is pointless to speak of war between Russia and the West. Just imagine if Russia were to defeat the West. Who would buy Russia's oil and gas? Where would the Russian elite turn to buy their cherished Mercedes? Where would they invest their assets?

One of the greatest similarities between Putin's system and fascism is the rallying cry against "external enemies" and the cult idolizing the physical virtues of the alpha male. It is no coincidence that so many photographs feature Putin with a naked torso or half-naked coeds fawning over him. And yet this is not so much fascist ideology as it is regressive ideology based on a primordial worship of the alpha male.

Mark my words: Russia is in for some really hard times after Putin's inauguration. Failed revolutions are always followed by serious reaction.

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