

Ukraine 2022

A situationist analysis.



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"It is because history itself haunts modern society like a specter, that we find pseudo-history constructed at all levels of life's consumption, to preserve the threatened equilibrium of the present frozen time."

- Guy Debord, The Society of the Spectacle.

Несчастья приходят целыми отрядами.

It is thus enough for us to go back a little before in the time to decipher the truth of what is "played" - obviously in the sinister spectacular sense - in this Ukraine now devastated; *namely the final unification of the integrated spectacular* of which Debord had, since 1988, produced the radical analysis: "In 1967, I distinguished two forms, successive and rival, of the spectacular power, the concentrated one and the diffuse one. The one and the other hovered above the real society, as its goal and its lie. The first one, putting forward the ideology summarized around a dictatorial personality, had accompanied the totalitarian counter-revolution, the Nazi as well as the Stalinist one. The other, encouraging wage earners to choose freely between a great variety of new goods that were in competition with each other, had represented this Americanization of the world, which frightened in some respects, but also seduced the countries where the conditions of bourgeois democracies of the traditional type had been able to be maintained for longer. A third form has been constituted since then, by the reasoned combination of the two previous ones, and on the general basis of a victory of the one *that had shown itself the strongest*, the diffuse form. It is the integrated spectacular, which now tends to impose itself worldwide.

Serial illusionists.

The society of the spectacle has for specialty the incessant production of illusions in the matter and in the heads, including in the heads that "direct". It functions as a gigantic vacuum cleaner of actions, aspirations, human intentions of all kinds, which invariably come out *transformed into spectaclecases*.

The various human motifs that pre-exist these actions are thus transformed into motifs *in the decorative sense*, which will be "customized", individually and collectively, according to the different regional "cultural" spectaclecases of the world spectacle.

This special alchemy, which transforms not mud into gold, *but everything into money*, is expressed in a particularly brilliant way, when the cinematographic motivations of a successful serial actor - Volodymyr Zelensky - playing the role of "president" of his own country, are finally transformed, 4 years later, into "political" motivations, *with the same success*.

The people's jester will have merged, so to speak, naturally - according to the "natural" slope of the society of the spectacle -, with his own role of "servant of the people" (Слуга народу), after creating a political *one-man show* in the colors of his series, taking up *the same scenery* and, just as logically, a party and a program in all respects identical to those of the television spectacle. As the "European cultural channel" (Arte), which is indeed an expert in this field, says in this regard, "from reality and fiction, there is only one step."

It will be just as logical, according to the spectaclist imperative - "*The spectacle must go on*" - that the former law student, who has become a total star, will *fatally* put on - according to the "fatal" slope of the society of the spectacle - the clothes of a tragic hero, with the predictable consequences that one can expect.

The main thing - which now belongs exclusively to his image *as a star-martyr*, for which he is obviously ready to sacrifice himself, in order to become *a legend* - is that the cathodic catharsis should make the people-viewers *see even more*.

Reagan's pupil has thus surpassed his master: what a long way, and so quickly, between the moment when he served as a voice-over for a "documentary" on his idol and his spectacular accession - in every sense of the word - to "the highest office" - in the mechanical sense of the term.

A specialist in the "authentic" use of social networks, *right on the Smartphone*, a spectacular educator of the young Ukrainian generations, this regional Zorro had everything to displease Putin, an "obsolete" nostalgic of the Great Russia, as others are of "eternal France". Especially since his television character, Goloborodko, will never be deprived, to silence his opponents, to hammer that "Putin has been deposed!"

But on the other side of the Sea of Azov, Russian spectators were witnessing a completely different spectacle; the self-production of a typical victim of hubris syndrome: the autocrat Putin. It is exactly a rejection, obviously anachronistic and sinisterly burlesque when it is puffed up, a hybrid creature half-Stalinist and half-Tsarist; in short, a kind of monstrosity that has *escaped from the laboratories of the concentrated spectacular*, grafted onto the decadent empire of the diffuse spectacular, and inevitably producing a rejection (the disoriented logic of spectacular integration necessarily tends to produce such toxic aberrations; America of the last 30 years has certainly not been stingy with them either)

For Putin would have admitted, at least during his first term, to involve Russia further in the integrated spectacular, *but the diffuse spectacular did not want it*. So he will go and rehash, arm and turn his resentment into a thirst for revenge, in the ideological *success-story*, indigestible neo-apocalyptic mush concocted by the directors of imperial nostalgia, of the glorification of the Russian soul - of which Putin will be *promoted to headliner for centuries* - and of the destruction of the Western enemy; the Dugin, Surkov, Kisseliov, etc.

In short: the rebranded concentrated spectacular can produce its own diffuse spectacular, and take over the world leadership of the integrated spectacular, which will precipitate the general fall of the Americanized diffuse spectacular.

Ukraine, the ultimate battlefield of the remaining rival forms of the spectacle.

That, in order to explain the sudden and brutal invasion of Ukraine, insane military considerations - Nato never intended to engage in a suicidal war with Russia, and did not and would not in any case need the Ukrainian space to do so - compete with long-obsolete civilizational considerations - there is now only one world culture: that of the spectacular totalitarian economy -, all considerations, and others, equally hollow, such as economic imperialism - as if the dice were not already thrown on the rigged carpet of world bankruptcy, as if the game of Monopoly was not already as mortgaged as the planetary resources are -, Considerations that the media, the experts and the politicians rehearse over and over again - and above all to mask their *systemic* stall in the face of this war with its demented contours - only reflect the fact that the spectacular illusion is in full swing - just like a shipwrecked man in a storm.

Putin and his Western "enemies" are obviously no lifeline but, all of them, just a few visible cogs of this society of the spectacle whose catastrophe scenario has *definitely* taken center stage.

In this universal perceptual inversion, any catastrophe can only appear in its scripted version, which is in itself a catastrophe, *and which contains all of them*, because if the ground of reality has already largely slipped away from under the feet of humanity, those who are *the basis of it*, in the sense of La Boétie - the peoples - sometimes frolic, but no longer too much, and above all, fight - *between mirages and swamps*.

Let's dissipate them now, since it is the only charitable stick we can give them.

If the Russian power has made such great efforts, these last years, to try to prevent the process of diffusion and implantation of the Americanized diffuse spectacular at its doors - in Ukraine -, it is because this proximity has everything to become a promiscuity; and that the Russian population, totalitarianly educated to mimetism by the conformism of the concentrated-diffused - in short, integrated - spectacular of the Putin era, could mimetically dream of it - and it would be the end of the Putin era - and of Putin.

Hence the resurgence, obviously bastardized - "*men are more like their time than their father*" - of good old Stalinist recipes: remake of the cult of personality, Rambo version in the Taiga, corruption under anti-corruption rhetoric, educational purges, internationalist nationalism.

In short: if in the West there is something new, but long pre-installed in the software of the integrated spectacular, with the concentration of the diffuse spectacular in the form of *QR coding of the survival of the spectators*, in the East, one cannot be outdone, with the broadcasting - as it should be on a militarized sound background - of the concentrated spectacular.

From the hybrid war in the Donbass to the open war on the whole territory of Ukraine, the goal is as simple as imperative, with in the background the spectacular imperialist warning, in case some "nations" would turn a deaf ear: to leave Ukraine - this international track for geopolitical bumper cars - in a state that puts it out of reach of the sirens of the West.

Nato takes the wind from the steppes: we have reached the tipping point where the definitive form of the society of the spectacle must irreversibly take shape; the competition is tough, but the result is certain.

For if we make the subjugated believe that they are still perhaps a little in a world that has been made to disappear, and that the rulers themselves suffer more and more seriously from the inconsequence of believing that they are still there in some ways, these voluntary blindnesses will not last long.

One should not believe that those who will not have understood quickly enough all the plasticity of the new rules of domination, and its kind of barbaric grandeur, can maintain themselves durably as useful archaism, in the surroundings of the real power.

The destiny of the spectacle is certainly not to end up in enlightened despotism.

The return of reality is imminent.

The spectacularization of everything has spared nothing; neither nature, which has become a vague backdrop, which is cracking everywhere; nor ordinary human beings, who are mere extras of a reality that escapes them even in the most banal things of daily life; nor the media, who are its most servile buffoons, nor the politicians of the whole world, who want to "whatever it takes" to take center stage; and of course even less the social relations, which have become almost completely virtual, without forgetting the commodities, these multi-millennial prostitutes at the service of money, and therefore of course not money itself, the faceless idol that paradoxically shapes everything in its image.

In short: the society of the spectacle is indeed the falsification of all reality and of all perception of reality.

So that whatever happens in the ever-expanding field of sanitary, military, economic, social and ecological disasters, everything is filtered and formatted to fit into the global scenario of the powerlessness of individuals and peoples, who are only *asked to blind each other*, which is certainly the determining function of social networks.

This general, *democratic* hypnosis is only very occasionally, and more and more rarely - *since the loss of the knowable center* - a mastered strategy of the leaders and their experts; of their advisors and their mafias, who will rather come most often, quite cynically, to graft on it their interests of dominants prey to the doubts of the collapse. The spectres of a pandemic or a war will be as many scepters.

But much more fundamentally, it is the spectacle itself, as *a planetary automaton*, as *a universal autocratic entity* that, *developing its conatus in the best of illusions*, will distribute the roles, from the smallest to the largest, and will make the actors it has selected move in all domains to serve its cause without sharing; the deployment, against all reality, of a substitutive mirage.

Because the spectacle leads above all a war without mercy to the reality, that it estimated very early, when it took its rise in the second half of the twentieth century, as being of too much. So it will be either him or her, on this earth. And if the spectacle, *in its demented circularity*, obviously sees itself as the winner, we have the comfort of knowing that it nevertheless depends entirely on reality to survive and unfold, and that therefore, the more it apparently makes it recede - recede in appearance - the more it makes it somehow regroup without its knowledge for the final assault, the outcome of which is not in doubt. For in the end, which is not far off, reality, whatever it may be, takes over. We still believe that the emancipated human being, who is rightly fully part of it, and who also secretly gathers beyond the old abandoned front lines, can still contribute.

This is what we wish for ourselves, and for you too.

Neither the economic, military, and even less psychological stakes determine in the last instance what is played out - in the spectacular sense - in Ukraine. Two rival forms of the society of the spectacle confront each other. This merciless war for supremacy responds to a precise dialectic: "if in the West, there is something new, but for a long time pre-installed in the software of the integrated spectacular, with the concentration of the diffuse spectacular in the form of QR coding the survival of the spectators, in the East, one cannot be outdone, with the broadcasting - as it should be on a militarized soundtrack -, of the concentrated spectacular."

Nato takes the wind from the steppes: we have arrived at this tipping point where the definitive form of the society of the spectacle must irreversibly take shape; the competition is tough, while the result is certain. For if we make the subjugated believe that they are still perhaps a little in a world that has been made to disappear, and that the rulers themselves suffer more and more seriously from the inconsequence of believing that they are still in it in some ways, these voluntary blindnesses will not last long. One should not believe that those who will not have understood quickly enough all the plasticity of the new rules of domination, and its kind of barbaric grandeur, can maintain themselves durably as useful archaism, in the surroundings of the real power. The destiny of the spectacle is certainly not to end up in an enlightened despotism.

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