

A Nationalist's Lexicon

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Файеры: flares

☒ This week I have a lot to worry about.

First on my list: Avoid being hit by that asteroid hurtling toward Earth. Yes, I know scientists say we shouldn't worry, but they said climate change was nothing to worry about, too.

Then I have to worry about Russian nationalism. Or maybe I have to worry about myself for worrying about it, because of course there's nothing to worry about. Come on, it's just a bunch of mixed-up kids!

To calm myself down, I spent several hours reading about Русский марш (the Russian March). That was a mistake. Not only did I get more worried about Russian nationalism, I also got worried about my language and cultural competence.

For example, I had no idea what зига was, as in кидать зигу, or the verb зиговать. It is Russian nationalist-speak for giving the Nazi salute (Sieg heil — Hail victory). In standard

Russian, the salute itself is зиг хайль, which was also chanted on Nov. 4: ☒ “Зиг-хайль, зиг-хайль, мы построим белый рай!” (Sieg heil! Sieg heil! We’ll build a paradise for whites!)

And then I was very confused about the entertainment people brought along, which included файеры (flares) and дымовые шашки (smoke bombs, presumably homemade). People had to wear masks to keep the smoke out of their eyes — even ski masks that hid their faces completely! I mean, why else would they wear them?

I thought their color-branding was gloomy. Everything was black and yellow, supposedly in reference to the Russian celebration flag — used for a couple of decades in the early 19th century — and the Russian imperial standard, used for about 50 years until 1917.

Why not use the Russian tricolor? Why use a flag that looks like the German national colors?

But the slogans upset me most of all. In the words of one participant, традиционные лозунги (traditional slogans) were:

- Русские, вперёд! (Onward, Russians!);
- Один за всех и все за одного (All for one and one for all). Thank you, Monsieur Dumas.
- России — русскую власть! (Russian leaders for Russia!)
- And the all-time nationalist movement fave: Россия для русских! (Russia for Russians).

Then there were “креативные лозунги” (creative slogans) heavy on anti-Caucasus sentiments, like: Не хотим кормить Кавказ — им Аллах и так подаст! (We don’t want to feed the Caucasus, Allah will provide for them) or an obscene version of it.

Another was: Отчего в бюджете дыры? Оттого, что съел Кадыров! (Why does the budget have holes? Because Kadyrov has eaten it up!)

Most of the other slogans were plain old racist and obscene. But one “creative” slogan puzzled me: Один-четыре-восемь-восемь! (One-four-eight-eight!) This, it turns out, is a кодовый лозунг (coded slogan) that is rendered 14/88 in English.

The first half refers to the 14 words “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children” coined by U.S. white supremacist David Lane (ignoring the fact that the Russian version has 12 words: мы должны защитить само существование нашего народа и будущее для белых детей). According to Russian nationalists, the second half refers to Lane’s revolting 88 Precepts.

Whatever happened to “Two-four-six-eight! Who do we appreciate”?!

All in all, the Russian March was a thoroughly upsetting linguistic and cultural event. But wait! One slogan from a Frenchman, another from an American, a salute from Germany. These aren’t nationalists. They’re internationalists.

So there’s nothing to worry about, right?

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