

## THE TRIUMPH OF MONEY

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editorial	Sketches of Russia's Money Culture	2
analysis	Money in Contemporary Russia: Old Habits, New Practical Constraints Anna Ochkina (Pensa)	3
sketch	Money Customs: Gifts and Taboos Aleksandra Arkhipova (Moscow)	9
focus	Russia in Crisis: Back to the Nineties? Jakob Fruchtmann (Bremen)	11
analysis	The Rouble as Film Star: Villain – Freebooter – Hero Alekssei Tsvetkov (Moscow)	12
sidelight	Money in the Vernacular. A Proverbial Treasure Chest Yelena Zhigarina (Moscow), Jakob Fruchtmann (Bremen)	17

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## SKETCHES OF RUSSIA'S MONEY CULTURE

## editorial

The present issue gives an insight into the culture surrounding money in Russia. In order to do this, we have chosen areas that particularly clearly demonstrate the transformation in attitudes to money – in day-to-day transactions, in language, in popular culture's treatment of the topic of money and in modern customs. The articles depict the fundamental changes that have taken place in Russia's money culture over the last twenty years.

In Russia today all throng toward money because here, too, everything is subject to money. In the past this was different. However, in the 1990s the material well-being of former Soviet citizens suddenly depended on monetary earnings alone. At the same time, for most of the people, there were no or very few opportunities to earn money. It should therefore come as no surprise that Russian capitalism is as idiosyncratic as its influence on Russian life. There was much which the 'Homo Sovieticus' had to get used to.

During the 'wild nineties', the economic reproduction of society became completely subordinated to the regime of money. However, this society proved itself generally unsuited to the production of monetary value, and therefore had *no money*. Thus, paradoxically, the process of monetarisation meant demonetisation, for example through defaults in payment and the rise of barter, substitutes for money and foreign currencies. Russian citizens experienced Russia's monetarisation as an extreme shortage of money – the *Trauma of the 1990s*.

The *first analysis* deals with the memories and scars which this period left among the population, as well as the significance of these processes for the day-to-day life of Russians. It deliberately

places 'subjective' personal experiences in the foreground.

Putin's administration placed the re-creation of the state's economic sovereignty at the centre of its economic, social and financial policies. This 'economic patriotism' was a hallmark of the 2000s. Of course, it could not but have consequences for the national discourse on money (see p. 11: *Russia in Crisis: Back to the Nineties?*). The *second analysis* demonstrates this with an analysis of the changes in the depiction of 'Mammon' in Russian television series.

Two short sketches show the popular traditions around money – firstly, in the realm of language by looking at examples of popular sayings and their contemporary usage and, secondly, in that of behaviour by examining customs. They give a small insight into the particularities of Russian morality regarding money. The description of Russian customs in the practical use of money, for example the taboo on openly discussing income and the rituals surrounding bribery, is perhaps also useful for those travelling to Russia.

*Translated from the German  
by Christopher Gilley*

## ABOUT THE GUEST EDITOR:

Dr. Jakob Fruchtmann is a research fellow at the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen. He works on contemporary Russia. His main research interests are discourse analysis, political language and economic culture. At the moment, he is investigating the social, political and linguistic consequences of 'Transformation as Monetarisation'.

MONEY IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA:  
OLD HABITS, NEW PRACTICAL CONSTRAINTS

Anna Ochkina

analysis

*Russians' attitudes to money have changed radically over the last decade. The practical significance of money in the Soviet Union, in the 1990s and under Putin could not be more different: following the experience of chronic scarcity in the Soviet Union, for which money only provided a limited remedy, the 1990s brought enormous fortunes for a select few and crushing poverty for the overwhelming majority. Moreover, the once free services, provided by the state and factories, that had been taken for granted, could now only be obtained through payment. This fundamentally altered the way money was seen.*

BORN IN THE USSR

Capitalism is becoming more firmly established in Russian and Russians are gradually adapting themselves to it. However, a new economic culture does not instantaneously replace its predecessor following the appearance of new socio-economic conditions; rather, it grows slowly out of the earlier, disappearing economic routines, in some ways reshaping them and in others reversing them completely, but also in some senses continuing them. When talking about the role of money in contemporary Russia – and this is particularly true today – one must mention a central feature of the Soviet economy: scarcity. In Soviet times, the possession of a certain amount of money did not give people the unconditional right to buy the products they wanted. First, it was necessary to gain access to the product itself. In addition to money, one needed a formal or informal means of getting hold of the scarce product.

There was not a direct correlation between monetary income and quality of life. People's real standard of living depended on their job, place of work, circle of acquaintances and, more importantly, on their ability and willingness to use them, as well as the place in which they lived.

On the informal level, a network of social connections – made up of relatives, colleagues, neighbours and individuals from the same area – guaranteed such access. It should come as no surprise that it was not the goods themselves which were traded but rather the access to scarce products. For example, I might need shoes; at the same time, a doctor

might want to send his son to an academic institute, something which I could organise. The doctor would find a place in a good health resort for the head of a shoe shop and I would get the shoes I needed. The more complicated the demand, the more unusual or grandiose, the more convoluted the chains of exchange became. Intermediaries appeared who could – at a price, of course – facilitate the exchange of goods and services.

TALONY, ZAKASY, BEREZKI AND CO.

On the formal level, coupons, waiting lists and privileges<sup>1</sup> provided access to scarce goods. Those lucky enough to have worked abroad for a time could buy products in the 'Berezka' chain of shops using foreign currency or special cheques issued by the Foreign Mail Order Trade Association.

Coupons were especially widespread. One could use them to buy butter, meat, vodka, flour and other produce in strictly limited amounts. There was even less access to foodstuffs in Siberia than in European Russia and, as a result, coupons were particularly common there.

Before public holidays, the workers received so-called 'ordered goods' (*zakazy*). Of course, no-one had actually ordered these 'ordered goods'. This was the term given to an arbitrarily chosen selection of scarce products. It was necessary to buy

<sup>1</sup> *Waiting lists* were kept in the workplace (for cars and flats) and in the large shops (above all, for electrical goods). *Privileges* means in this case the right to buy things in a special shop, to receive treatment in special – and better – hospitals, and so on. The state and party organised the distribution of scarce goods.

## analysis

them, and people did so even though the products – for example caviar – could be quite expensive and were by no means essential. In general, the habit of stocking up on scarce products in great quantities simply because they were scarce was characteristic of Soviet consumer behaviour. Every family had a stock of foodstuffs, washing powder, flour, shampoo and other goods. Often, people had to sell the useless products bought in haste or exchange them for something really essential. People stocked up on a grand scale. Often they had to borrow money quickly in order to take advantage of these opportunities. We washed our youngest son with the last piece of the baby soap we had bought shortly before the birth of our oldest son; the age difference between them is ten years.

‘Foodstuff’ trains to Moscow were a common sight in the late Soviet period. The children in our town asked each other the riddle ‘What’s long and green with yellow stripes and smells of oranges and smoked sausage?’ The answer was ‘Sura’, the daily Moscow train. It was green and had yellow stripes on the carriages; purchasing oranges and

smoked sausage was much harder in our town than in Moscow.

The Soviet system offered excellent justifications for the chaos of everyday life. The orientation towards ‘spiritual values’ was not simply an ideological cliché as is often suggested today, but rather a fully tangible fact of social life which some put into practice. This idea of life was not, of course, wide spread. However, it was held up as a desirable and obtainable role model. Wealth was genuinely unpopular.

This oblique relationship to money gave rise to some comical socio-psychological phenomena. Firstly, for many the acquisition of money was by no means the only or even main goal. The majority of Soviet citizens could not imagine what it would be like to have a large sum of money in their hands. They also did not understand what genuine poverty was. Although they knew poverty from books, they could not imagine it in reality. When at the end of the 1980s an unemployed American travelled to Russia, he was shown on all the TV channels. Everyone laughed: ‘How can he be unem-



*What people got for the ‘people’s enterprises’: privatisation voucher 1992*

*Source: internet, origin unknown*

*Text: ‘State bond’, ‘10.000 roubles’, ‘Valid until 31.12.1993’, ‘Counterfeiting will be prosecuted by the law’. Figure: the ‘White House’, until 1993 seat of the Supreme Soviet resp. the Congress of People’s Deputies.*

## analysis

employed? He's wearing jeans and trainers!' We simply could not imagine how little such things cost in comparison to the opportunity to receive education or necessary medical care or have somewhere to live, i.e. in comparison to that which we received at no charge. We saw many goods as an inalienable right, upon which it was impossible to place a monetary value. We only saw the constantly deteriorating quality of medical care, queues for accommodation and the lack of commodities.

## THE ADVANCE OF MONEY

In the 1990s, money took its revenge. It overcame all the economic, social and moral hurdles to become the overriding concern of modern life. People sought to get hold of it at any cost; they dreamed of it; it became the ends which justified any means. Only one thing remained shameful: poverty. Today, Russians do not like to remember the 1990s. Almost everyone associates the period with some sort of unpleasantness. Soviet society was, of course, not monolithic. However, in the 1990s, inequalities in wealth tore apart groups of friends, couples and even families.

The question of money intruded rudely into personal relationships: young women weighed up the financial prospects of their future partners, while young men developed feelings for brides with a promising future. In 1997, I heard my students use the phrase 'girl without a dowry'. Something that I found old-fashioned and almost incomprehensible when I was going to school in the 1980s had become current and modern – or at least timely – for those who had grown up in the 1990s.

The reign of money followed a short but tragic period in which it was worth nothing. In 1990 and 1991, coupons were introduced into an increasing number of regions, even in Moscow, which had always enjoyed a privileged position in the past. In 1991, in order to buy something in the capital's shops, you needed a special 'visiting card' with a

photograph and stamp. The distribution of goods via coupons encouraged a wave of interpersonal barter: everyone sought to exchange their hastily bought – but useless – stockpiles for something necessary. There was much apprehension about selling due to the soaring inflation.

Money is the type of force that does not tolerate neglect. Ostap Bender, the hero of the once cult novels by Ilya Ilf and Yevgeny Petrov, 'Twelve Chairs' and 'The Golden Calf',<sup>2</sup> said 'If there are many banknotes in circulation in the country, then there must be people who have a lot'. As early as 1990, people with a lot of money appeared again in the Soviet Union. These were speculators in scarce commodities, the owners of underground factories making 'American' jeans and other 'brand-name' goods, the owners of illegal video shops and other operators in the grey economy. Those who already had large capital had a considerable advantage; even more important to success, however, was to be established in the system of illegal, semi-legal and even official economic networks. The ability to make decisions and access resources was exchanged for money or participation in business; money flowed out of the underground and regained its position in the economy. In this way, the scarcity of goods was the basis for the further economic differentiation and the new social structures that began to develop in the 1990s, when the market became the official ideology guiding economic practice.

## YOU HAVE TO 'SPIN'

After 1991, the word 'krutitsya' became popular. It literally means 'to spin', but it was used to describe dealing with a difficult situation in a creative and flexible way. Everyone 'spun' wherever and however they could. They sold, bought and sold again. Cooperatives, companies and, later, banks all sprang up.

<sup>2</sup> Satires about the period of the NEP, published in 1928 and 1931 respectively.

## analyse

In our student hall of residence, there was a strange man, always dressed in a terry-towel dressing gown, running up and down, constantly making telephone calls from the payphone in the hall; this was before the days of mobile phones. He was a 'businessman'; under his bed was a suitcase containing one million roubles. When he was setting up a deal, he took his future business partner into his room to show off the suitcase and its contents to prove that he was not just full of 'empty words'. Another 'businessman' had packets of money instead of books on his bookcase. Gradually, Russians began to understand what really large sums of money meant. In the 1990s, the country became obsessed with making money.

At the beginning of the 1990s, defaults in payment reached crisis level. Businesses did not pay taxes or their suppliers, there was no money for workers' wages and the pay arrears grew with terrifying speed. Pensions were rarely withheld, but other forms of state benefits, for example child benefits, which in any case were laughably small, were not paid for years. Sometimes, factory workers would receive payment in the form of the goods they had made themselves: watches, bicycles, binoculars or crystal vases. People began to trade on the quiet, as they still felt this activity to be shameful: some were only able to make ends meet, while those with starting capital were able to make fortunes. People survived this period in different ways. Some threw themselves into trade, others lived from the products of their gardens, while yet others borrowed from their more successful friends and colleagues. For most citizens, however, this 'trade' was simply an indication of destitution and an improvised means of surviving the precarious economic situation.

As early as mid-1992, everyone was trying to sell the goods they had rather than exchange them. Almost everyone dabbled in trade. Solvent demand was extremely small, but there was also a lack of essential goods. Newly fledged entrepreneurs

streamed abroad to Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. They took with them everything that could be extracted from the collapsing economy, from watches and binoculars to vodka and work tools. They brought back clothes, perfume and toys. This gave rise to the *chelnoki*, or shuttle traders. Markets sprang up spontaneously throughout cities. It seemed that everyone was involved with them.

As a form of payment in daily, unofficial monetary transactions, the dollar dislodged the stable currency of vodka. Tradesmen employed by the housing authorities to carry out repairs in a flat usually did not receive money from the residents. Instead, they were given a 'fee' (or tip) in the form of a bottle of vodka. Such tradesmen were worth their weight in gold and you had to wait for them for a long time. As a result, everyone tried to obtain their services. Starting in 1992, vodka lost its value; everyone preferred payment in money, which became increasingly available. However, in 1995 I came across a fellow from the old school. When I offered him money, he asked for vodka. It turned out that I did not have any bottles at home. He looked downcast and explained that his wife always relieved him of his cash. 'Then buy vodka on the way home', I suggested. 'What are you thinking of, pet?', complained the honest old man, 'It's wrong to lie'. I have to confess that I bought him the vodka myself; he worked well and always arrived sober and on time.

In 1992, 'shock therapy' began. Prices shot up; in the first quarter of 1992, they went up six times. Although it remained the official method of payment, the rouble lost its roles both as a measure of value and means of accumulating wealth. In both Russian society and the Russian economy, the American dollar reigned supreme. The value of contracts was bound to the dollar, prices were named in dollars, wages were set in dollars in the emerging commercial companies, savings were

## analyse

kept in dollars and illegal payments were made in dollars. The dollar ruled in Russia until the default of 1998.

One peculiarity is that Russians pay very close attention to the physical appearance of the dollar. Worn notes and notes with scribbling or torn edges are only exchanged by the banks at a considerably worse exchange rate or not at all. Russians prefer 100-dollar notes; notes of other values somehow have not acquired popularity. When Russians started actively buying euros, their interest in the state of the notes also spread to this currency.

## INVESTMENT AND DACHAS

At the beginning of the 1990s, pyramid schemes appeared. People became obsessed with the promise of easy riches. Rivers of roubles flowed into

firms such as *MMM*, *Vlastelina*, *Telemarket*, *Khoper-Invest* and *Selenga Traders* from individuals who naïvely believed that capitalism would make everyone in society rich. *Telemarket*'s slogan – ‘We sit and the money comes’ – reflects well the expectations of the inexperienced Russians. The collapse of the pyramid schemes was one of the hard lessons which Russians received from capitalism.

It is significant that Russians did not know what to do with the vouchers<sup>3</sup> which represented their stake in society's commonly owned assets. They sold them very cheaply to ‘businesspeople’, put them in pyramid schemes, invested in their fail-

<sup>3</sup> All Russian citizens received vouchers as part of the privatisation of state property, 1992–4; their nominal value was 10,000 roubles.



*ODNA Y.E.* (*odna uslovnaya yedinita*) = ‘one conditional unit’ – a euphemism for the dollar: contempt for the rouble was popular in the 1990s (source: internet, origin unknown)

The text is Russian but written in Latin letters with a somewhat idiosyncratic transcription *Zakroma of rodina*: ‘Granary of the Fatherland’ ← a system of state reserves, especially for corn, known as ‘*zakroma rodina*’ was founded in 1931. Empty shop shelves provided stark contrast to the yearly proclamation of a successful harvest. Therefore, the phrase came to be used ironically for any ‘black holes’ into which promised or expected riches vanished, implying theft or fraud. (<http://www.otrezal.ru/catch-words/516.html>)

*Ne zabudem ob America*: ‘We won’t forget you America!’ can be associated with the popular tattoo ‘*Ne zabudu mat rodnuyu*’, that is, ‘I won’t forget mother dearest’.

*This is chisto normalnie dengi*: ‘This is, like, real money, man’.

*Moskovskaya Mejbankovskaya Valutnaya Birja*: ‘Moscow Interbank Monetary Exchange’.

The serial letter (the ‘E’ with two dots) is a very common euphemism for a rude expression and could be translated as ‘F...ck!’.

The picture of President Washington is subtitled ‘Wash & Go’.

## analysis

ing companies; some did not receive them at all, and others even just threw them away. Only a few managed to trade in their vouchers for shares in oil and gas companies. The dangers of capitalism only caught up with these successful investors in 2008 during the current crisis. The various methods of investment have failed to capture the Russians' interest: they either do not provide sufficient income or they revive memories of the failed pyramid schemes.

When talking about the survival and adaptation of individuals to market conditions, it is impossible to ignore the importance of Russian dachas. For most Russians, dachas are not places of relaxation with a lawn and a favourite apple tree. They are more like allotments, providing foodstuffs for many Russian families in the provincial towns. According to a study by the Federal State Statistics Service, the average family produced between 23% and 31% of the food it consumed over the period 1994–2004. Selling surplus produce from the allotments represented (and continues to represent) a substantial source of income for many families. In the villages, this supplementary agricultural activity often develops, regardless of its legal status, into fully blown family businesses. These kinds of illegal companies produce up to 40% of the foodstuffs sold in the markets of certain regions of Russia. For children who live in the cities, their parents' private firms represented a reliable means of support.

Dachas help many Russian families on a middling income to save money on foodstuffs. They can therefore afford to spend more on the education of their children, mobile telephones, furniture and renovations to their flats than they would otherwise be able to. This has created a naturally post-industrial – or a post-industrially natural – economy.

Gradually, money is penetrating those sectors which used to be closed off to the market. In 1993,

fee-charging universities and hospitals appeared; over the 1990s, a housing market developed. Today, it is possible to buy anything in Russia. This would not be Russia if there were no excesses. Paying for the opportunity to receive knowledge and qualifications often mutates into the purchase of certificates of education. Corruption has spread. Semi-official donations are, in practice, bribes in return for university places, proof of participation in a course, essays, exams or dissertations. At one point, it became fashionable for bureaucrats to have doctoral titles. However, they had no time to write a doctoral thesis. To meet this demand, collectives grew up to write theses; academic degrees thus acquired their price.

Russians' financial activity has become more varied and increasingly similar to that in the West. Russians have come to master the use of bank cards, cash-free forms of payment, online banking, and loans and mortgages for consumers. However, they are only willing to trust their dachas unconditionally.

*From the Russian by Christopher Gilley*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Anna V. Ochkina has a doctorate in philosophy and teaches in the politics department of the Penza State Pedagogical University's faculty of sociology and social work. Her research interests include the question of social inequality – especially its ramifications for gender – and social policy.

## SUGGESTED READING:

Ledeneva, Alena: *Blat Exchange: Between Gift and Commodity*, Online <http://www.colbud.hu/honesty-trust/ledeneva/pub03.htm> (Chapter 5 from *Russia's Economy of Favours*, Cambridge 1998)



## MONEY CUSTOMS: GIFTS AND TABOOS

Aleksandra Arkhipova

## sketch

In the Soviet Union, the state taught its citizens that the only legitimate commercial relationship following the achievement of socialism would be that between the state and its representatives; commercial relationships between private individuals would be illegitimate. Consequently, if a tradesman performed a service – for example, if a plumber cleaned the bath pipes or an electrician laid some wiring – then the price of that service was not fixed in money but in the request for a bottle of vodka. After such a request, one could give a real bottle, but in most cases one gave money equal to the cost of a bottle of vodka.

In this way, money as payment for private labour became taboo and was transformed, albeit formally, into a gift. If someone you know performed a service for you, it was bad form to offer them money: it was better to suggest something in exchange later. Sailors working abroad who brought back a carton of foreign cigarettes could exchange these, for example, for a scarce type of cheese. We see here two aspects: on the one hand, the problem of getting hold of scarce goods, and on the other, the reluctance to use money when it was possible to conduct an exchange in the form of *gift* and *counter-gift*.

Of course, this encouraged at the same time the development of a stable, publically condemned and prohibited system of bribery. However, in everyday life, it also created an assortment of taboos and prohibitions associated with monetary transactions that anywhere else would be perfectly normal. It seemed that even a simple situation such as offering a bribe or *gift* acquired a range of its own traditions. Those who grew up in the last Soviet generation say that they could not offer bribes unless they found someone older and more experienced, such as an older relative, to explain how to do it correctly. Ignorance of the corresponding ceremony complicated the real and sometimes essen-

tial monetary transaction. People started looking for *someone who knew how to bribe*: for example, by slipping money into the paper of a chocolate bar or placing it in an unmarked envelope.

It was inappropriate to give money for a birthday, for instance. Only very close relatives could do this, maybe because in this situation the money ‘did not leave the family’. Traditionally, at birthdays, weddings and funerals, money was collected in a white envelope, and those receiving the money did not know who had given what. When offering to pay the bill for an acquaintance, for example for a taxi or for coffee, it was impolite to say ‘I’ll pay’ and much more well mannered to say something like ‘Don’t worry about the money’.

Here, again, we encounter a taboo situation: mentioning the necessary monetary transaction (paying for something) aloud was not very polite; it was much better to underline the *absence* of a money problem. It was better not to say how much one’s new clothes cost if they were expensive; however, if it was necessary to give a price, it was a good idea to invent a lower one. The desire to never name the exact price of things, but rather express it with a more symbolic description, can be seen in the following example: traditionally, prostitutes stood on the steps to the main entrance to the Yekaterinburg railway station; however, where they stood was not organised haphazardly, but rather in order of their price, with the most expensive at the top.

The 1990s saw the collapse of the Soviet value system, and this, of course, influenced these concepts. The ‘discomfort’ and ‘unseemliness’ of giving money to non-relatives, a practice which had traditionally been not simply preserved but also cultivated, transformed into the exact opposite. For example, patients seeing a doctor in a fee-charging clinic might give a small sum to him or her personally in addition to the amount paid at the reception, especially if he or she was an acquaintance or

## sketch

had been recommended personally. 'And this is for you', they would say, still refusing to mention the exact amount out loud. In the past, this transaction would have consisted of the gift of a box of chocolates or a bottle of cognac, but not money.

A person's dependency on having *real money* in his or her pocket rather than on the goods distributed by the state among its citizens has revived old customs: it is necessary to leave small change

around the flat so that one always has money; you should not sweep up rubbish in the direction of the door, because if you do, *there will be no money in the family*; taxi drivers must not accept money from the hands of their passengers directly into their own hands, otherwise what they have already earned will fly out of their hands. A society which constantly dreams about finding money for essential goods *now* has readily adopted a new wave of customs connected with the magic of money. Today, it is common

to grow a money tree (*Crassula ovata*) at home – a Chinese custom that has entered Russia through the channels of popular culture. One should never allow one's wallet to be empty; there must always be one dollar there 'to breed others'. Traders in the markets, which in the 1990s included half of the country, give thanks for the first customer of the morning: it is good if he or she buys some-

thing, regardless of how much it costs; the trader then waves or wipes the notes received over the goods set out for sale in order to ensure profit and success.

Old women sitting on the benches between the houses shake their heads disapprovingly: 'Now everyone is talking about money!'. The taboos surrounding money are still undergoing change: 'panta rhei', everything flows – above all money.



*The self-help guide I Attract Money from the series 'The Happy World of Natalya Pravdina' (bestselling author and Feng-Shui advisor), St. Petersburg: Nevsky Prospekt 2004.*

*Translated from the Russian  
by Christopher Gilley*

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Alexandra Arkhipova, ethnologist, works at the Centre for Research and Teaching of Typology and Semiotics of Folklore at the Russian State University for the Humanities (RGGU) in Moscow. Her research interest is popular mythmaking about Soviet history; she also participates in her institute's research on Mongolian folklore.

## READING SUGGESTION:

Lindquist Galina. Channels of agency. Money and magic in contemporary Russia // Department of Social Anthropology, University of Stockholm, Paper presented at the Fourth Nordic Conference on the Anthropology of Post-Socialism, April 2002. ([http://www.anthrobase.com/Text/L/Lindquist\\_G\\_01.htm](http://www.anthrobase.com/Text/L/Lindquist_G_01.htm))

## RUSSIA IN CRISIS: BACK TO THE NINETIES?

*Jakob Fruchtmann*

## focus

Some economic liberals have argued that the business practices of the 1990s – for example, long delays in paying wages, remunerating workers in the goods they produce, non-payment of taxes and entry into the underground economy – could give endangered companies a buffer that would allow them to continue operating profitably.

They do not consider that perhaps the Russian population has become too ‘spoiled’ to accept once more such conditions uncomplainingly. Instead, they worry that the success of Putin’s reform would not permit ‘the flexibility of the 1990s’.

Meanwhile, the state’s money has become the only currency in Russia – not only according to the law, but also in the real economy. The surveillance, registration and taxation of transactions by the state has gained acceptance, and the payment of wages have developed into a buttress underpinning the state by guaranteeing a large part of the population an ordered civic life, enabling voting and even individual contributions to the ‘solution of the demographic problem’.

From the ‘Putinist’ viewpoint, this recreation of the state’s economic sovereignty was one of the decisive ‘successes’ of the 2000s. At least for that part of the Russian elite concerned about state security, a return to the ‘flexibility’ of the 1990s would be a nightmare.

It is still unclear what conclusions the political elite will make from the worsening crisis. At the moment, only one thing is clear: the elites do not intend to question the ‘normality’ of the credit system’s power over society. Instead, the citizens are called upon to do their part to help the Russian state restore a working economy for the good of the national resurgence, as well as to contribute to the search for scapegoats for this project’s failures.

Thus, the discourse on money crosses almost seamlessly into the patriotic discourse of national sovereignty – one of the typical attributes of ‘Putinism’.

*Translated from the German  
by Christopher Gilley*

MONEY IS POWER (*ALEXEI TSVETKOV*)

A recent opinion poll by the ‘Levada Centre’ shows that more than 70% of Russians are convinced that money decides everything: without it, it is impossible to get a good education or medical care, nor can one rely on fair treatment from the police, courts and other state institutions. In addition, the overwhelming majority of Russians predict that money will play an even greater role in the future and that the ‘rich will get richer, and the poor poorer’. The well-known sociologist Boris Dubin sees a connection between the cult of money and mass poverty: ‘The less well-off Russians are, the more they believe that money can do everything’. Today, only 18% of Russian families have some sort of savings that would last ‘several months’. In contrast, about 40% are currently in debt. The majority do not separate money and power, seeing the former as the main sign and expression of the latter.

*(Transl. C.G.)*

Source: Boris Dubin: ‘Upravleniia stoimost’, *Weekend*, vesna 2009:25 [2/2009]

## THE ROUBLE AS FILM STAR: VILLAIN – FREEBOOTER – HERO

Aleksei Tsvetkov

## analysis

*In the 1990s, Russians faced a ‘wild’ struggle for a freedom measured in roubles and dollars. The Putin regime replaced this with a private sphere protected by the state; in return, it demanded patriotism – which for many did not seem to be too high a price. Russian state and commercial popular culture followed money’s dazzling rise to become ‘the god of commodities’. A standard component of personal happiness in soaps is, alongside love, financial success. Although at first the power of money was largely a question of private violence, such that gangsters could easily be portrayed as heroes, now the Russian yuppie is a constant presence on the small screen, regardless of the fact, that both are equally creatures of fantasy for the average Russian viewer.*

## RUSSIAN CLASSICS AND SOVIET PROPAGANDA

In a well-known scene from *The Idiot* by Dostoevsky, Nastasya Filippovna burns a large fortune in a stove right before the main character’s eyes. In doing so, she displays her individuality and spirituality, as well as her choice in favour of existential values and rejection of bourgeois rationality. At the same time, it foretells her tragic death in a materialistic world. This scene captured the imaginations of Soviet citizens and is typical of classical Russian culture’s relationship to money. It was less that Soviet citizens often took Dostoevsky’s book (which, incidentally, was included in the school programme) in their hands, but more that adaptations of *The Idiot* often appeared on TV.

In addition to the classical canon, there was the continuous party propaganda that repeatedly reiterated that money was becoming obsolescent and its significance for human life was continually falling; in the near future, it would be abolished, and as a result it could only be important for those who had no place in the shining future.

It should come as no surprise that as soon as the propaganda ceased and society opened up to Western popular culture, the attitude towards money became the equally radical opposite of the old position. Money was still fetishised, but it was now seen as desirable rather than dangerous. An indigenous popular culture sprang up that had its own relationship to money. The old saying ‘Money cannot buy happiness’ received the addition ‘only large

amounts of money can’. Money became the real intimate sphere. Everyone is willing to discuss their sexual preferences openly, but no-one wants to reveal the sources and size of their income. During even the most impudent talk shows, if someone asks a question relating to this, it is seen as the height of bad manners and the audience buzzes judgementally, permitting the guest not to answer.

## TELEVISION SERIES: LOVE DESPITE OR LOVE OF MONEY

Let’s take a look at the most popular television series of the last few years. In *Moia prekrasnaya nyanya* (‘My Perfect Nanny’)<sup>1</sup>, a young woman from the Ukraine loses her job in Moscow as a shop assistant; by accident, she becomes the nanny to the three children of a producer living in a mansion in the capital. The Ukraine, the heroine’s land of origin, is Russia’s poorer neighbour, sharing with it a Soviet past and many cultural similarities; it is seen as the ideal source of brides, servants and prostitutes. Throughout the series, her aim is to marry her employer. He is no less interested in her, but hindering the path to love are the classical differences and distractions – different social circles, ways of speaking and tastes. The humorous situations are all based on these contrasts. It is interesting that the attractions of the producer

<sup>1</sup> The Russian adaptation of the American series ‘The Nanny’, originally broadcast 1993–1999.

## analysis

do not extend beyond his wealth and the people he knows. He has everything which a provincial bride could dream of and knows everyone who is important. However, the scriptwriters did not attempt to give him even one charismatic trait. He is soft, docile and easily changes his mind; women, children and servants all boss him around. It seems that the 'ideal groom' according to this serial is a rich man without character who can easily be manipulated.

In a similar, but less successful series, *Ne rodis krasivoi* ('Don't be Born Beautiful'<sup>2</sup>), a young woman of plain appearance and humble origins dedicates her life to marrying the boss of the company in which she works. This becomes the incentive for her professional success and transformation in appearance. The object of her desire is the same type – weak-willed and dependent on the 'businessmen' surrounding him; he is an overgrown child incapable of defending his opinions. It is difficult to imagine a situation in which a man

<sup>2</sup> A reference to the Russian saying, 'Don't be born beautiful, be born happy'.

like this could interest the heroine if he did not possess his wealth.

Another popular series was *Kto v dome khozyain?* ('Who's the Boss?'), based on the American serial of the same name. It is *My Perfect Nanny* reversed: a businesswoman employs a failed provincial footballer as a housekeeper. The road to their union is hindered by the typical differences. Of course, the character of the 'bride' is much more distinctly drawn than the depictions of women in the above-mentioned series. She is sexy, independent and is psychologically and intellectually superior to her housekeeper.

Why have such serials been so successful? On the one hand, in Russia there are now many women who have economic success but remain unmarried (and visit fashionable clubs with male strippers). In their own eyes, they seek to justify keeping their young, sporty lovers. On the other hand, there are even more single women with children who dream about being in this position. Finally, there is a whole army of economically unsuccessful men dreaming about marrying a rich woman,



Two washing machines and two fridges – the future dowry for their daughters. Value: 50,000 roubles. Source: photo series 'Show me your most expensive possession' by Julia Vishnevets (<http://kunstkamera.livejournal.com/199515.html>).

## analysis

or at least becoming an 'expensive toy boy'. Money is a barrier to marriage, but not to love. It provides reasons for assassinations, and more than outer appearance, it is the source of sexual charisma simply because it provides the opportunity to enter the pleasant world of the successful urban bourgeois. In an advertisement for Russian jewellery, the hero calls the heroine 'dear'. She immediately demands clarification of how dear she is as calculations of the value of her rings and bracelets run through her head.

In another series, *Sshastlivy vmeste* ('Happy Together')<sup>3</sup>, the main hero, Bukin, is depicted as a comical loser, above all because of his low salary. His neighbour is no less worthy of the designation 'loser'. Nonetheless, he is seen as being much luckier and less laughable simply because he is kept by his rich wife, a businesswoman, from whom he can always borrow money, even though he never works. The most common complaint from the press and viewers about this series is the question of how a humble shoe salesman can afford a two-storey flat. In Russia, a dwelling like this is a sign of a much higher social status. In all other respects, Bukin is a typical 'poor Russian'. He often accuses the West, and especially Americans, of spiritual impoverishment, mercantilism and degeneracy. However, his unrealisable dream, like that of the majority, is to travel there, where a shoe salesman really can live in a two-storey flat. Opinion polls show that the number of Russians ready to emigrate to the 'spiritually empty West' in order to marry or find work is growing constantly despite the rising wave of patriotism and even chauvinism in Russia.

Compare this to the three adaptations of the well-known novel by Ilya Ilf and Yevgeny Petrov *Zolotoi telenok* ('The Golden Calf') on the period of NEP, published in 1931. In the 1960s, this was a story of how a millionaire, regardless of whether

he was a quiet operator or an adventurer, had no place in Soviet society and was doomed to failure. In the post-Soviet version from the 1990s, entitled *Mechty idiota* ('The Dreams of an Idiot'), the millionaire was victorious and ended up with everything, a completely different ending to that in the book, which now seemed outdated. A recent serialisation for television again questioned the certainty of this victory, albeit for conservative rather than progressive reasons. We are reminded that Russia is Asian; here, the ruling class is always completely identical to the state administration – this means that there is no room for millionaires who do not belong to the ruling echelons, even if they operate underground. However, in all three versions, the hero must sacrifice love in his search for money.

## CRIME SERIALS: UNDERSTANDING THE 1990s

The appearance of the first 'stable' fortunes and the replacement of economic chaos by state-directed capitalism in the new decade created the need to explain to viewers the origins of the new Russian millionaires' money. The first saga to attempt to depict the period of 'primitive accumulation' was the series *Brigada*, a story of nobly minded brigands. Where does its attraction lie? The heroes do not balk at imposing an 'unofficial tax' on the rich, who inspire fear and submission in everyone else. They are cool, masculine friendship is the most important thing for them, they love risk and are happy to redistribute a part of the rich's ill-gotten wealth for their own benefit. Those who do not do so have only themselves to blame; they lack the courage, and as a result, the real men from the *Brigada* will not share with them. Instead, they share with the 'humble and oppressed', creating sentimental scenes on the TV screen. During the 2000s, little boys throughout the country playing in backyards imitated the heroes from the *Brigada*. This theme was taken up by *Vorotily* ('Tycoons'),

<sup>3</sup> The Russian version of the American series 'Married...with Children', first broadcast in 1987.

## analysis

broadcast on the First State Channel. The heroes of these series were much 'cleaner'. While still students under the Soviet regime, they began trading in jeans and beer in the Russian provinces (Ryazan), becoming the first generation of the bourgeois in their region. The four friends always made money through their creativity and ability to estimate demand. At the same time, they had to cope with the cruelty and extortion of the mafia on the one hand and the police on the other. Under these pressures, one of the 'musketeers' betrays their friendship. However, for the other three, their friendship remains more important than money. The ratings for *Vorotily* were much lower than those of *Brigada* because the businessmen depicted in them were 'relatively honest' and such 'capitalist realism' seemed as removed from reality as the 'socialist realism' of the recent past.

CINEMA: THE POWER OF MONEY OR MONEY VS. POWER?

The wallets of the average cinemagoer or DVD buyer are, of course, a little thicker than those of the standard audience for serials. Students in the provinces, pensioners, teenagers and the unemployed cannot go to the cinema often. According to contemporary Russian logic, in which money has completely replaced intellect, this means that the discussion of money and the conflicts it creates must be more sophisticated.

The real turning point was the film *Brat* ('Brother') from 1997. It was an attempt to film a Russian version of *Rambo*. Danilo Bagrov, a professional killer who had fought in the First Chechen War, cannot find a place for himself in society. He becomes involved in criminal activity, allying with his criminal brother. Money means nothing to him; this is just one sign of his dangerous idiosyncrasy. Enormous sums of money come into his possession, but he just hands out packets of notes to his friends. In the finale, he hitchhikes off into obscurity. The

trauma of the war in the Caucasus mixed in with mafia connections and complete uncertainty about the future are all characteristics with which audiences could identify, making the killer Bagrov the main screen hero at the end of the 1990s.

*Brat* was so successful that the film's authors made a sequel in 2000: *Brat 2*, which displays a somewhat different attitude to money, more in line with that of the 2000s. This time, Bagrov is sent to New York in order to punish a greedy American businessman who deals in pornography and drugs and has tricked an honest Russian ice-hockey player. At the same time, Danilo settles scores with the competing Ukrainian mafia, threatens an aggressive African-American with a pistol and rescues a Russian prostitute from captivity. In the climactic confrontation with the American millionaire, the Russian killer proves to him that 'Strength lies not in money, but in truth'.<sup>4</sup> Truth is understood to mean the defence of 'one's own kin', i.e. Russians. The power of money is in direct opposition to the idea of national unity and mutual assistance. Throughout the film, Bagrov repeats, mantra-like, the children's poem 'I saw that I have an enormous family...', which in pre-revolutionary Russia began the patriotic education of schoolchildren, and in the final scene we hear the hit-song 'Goodbye America!' by the Russian group Nautilus Pompilius. The second film's box-office takings and appeal considerably exceeded those of its predecessor.

An even clearer victory over the power of money by nationally minded 'siloviki' – those politicians who emerged from the defence and security services – is evident in the dialogue in the films *Nochnoi dozor* ('Night Watch') and *Dnevnoi dozor* ('Day

<sup>4</sup> Having cut a bloody path to reach the American millionaire, the film's hero threatens to kill the villain, saying 'So, tell me, American, where does strength lie? Is it in money? [...] I think that strength is in truth. He who possesses the truth is stronger. So, you deceived someone, took their money. And what? Did you become stronger? No, you didn't. Because you don't have truth behind you. The one who was deceived has truth behind him; he is stronger'.

analysis

Watch'), based on the most successful fantasy novels of the last decade.<sup>5</sup> This victory is not only a personal triumph, but rather one accomplished by whole groups or even 'different types of humankind'. The 'Dark Others' are the elite of the 1990s depicted as vampires, who value not only human blood but also those worldly goods that can be bought with money. Their world is made up of nightclubs, markets, boutiques, expensively but tastelessly furnished flats and luxury cars.

The Russian pop stars Ilya Lagutenko and Zhanna Friske play the vampires enthusiastically. However, their uninhibited spectacle of consumption, which threatens to destroy the world, can be reined in by the 'Light Others', the new elite from the organisation 'Gorsvet' (Municipal Electrics Company), which represents a cross between the Russian Ministry of Civil Defence and the security services of the FSB; thus we receive a broad fantasy portrait of the new bureaucratic elite under Putin, saving the country from the chaos of the 1990s brought about by the vampires of the 'Dark'. The 'Light Others' live in a world of the sparsely decorated offices of civil servants, garages, storerooms, uniforms and staff cars. 'Gorsvet' is the guarantee of eternal return. The central idea of this film about a secret

<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed analysis of both the books and the films, see *kultura* 1/2006.

occult war is that the irresponsible bohemians and unpatriotic bourgeois should be under the secret surveillance of the national state apparatus.

In the 1990s, it seemed to many that the opposite was the case: the ruling elite had been totally privatised by capital and only served to mask it. In the 2000s, these two aspects changed places. The 1990s were the chaotic period of redistribution, when the 'Dark Others' were at their most active. Following this came the new order overseen by the 'Light Others', during which the redistributed wealth was protected. Now, the 'verticals of power' must control the flow of capital. Those in power ('Gorsvet') issue licences to vampires strictly limiting the number of human victims, exacting strict punishments for those who exceed the quota. The 'Dark' use of economic means of coercion, entangled with personal interest, lose in the 'Watch' films to the administrative powers of compulsion of the 'Light', which is founded on truth and loyalty.

However, the secret war between the two orders must not degenerate into total, mutual destruction. The 'Dark Others' seek to exploit, suck dry and appropriate the energy of the masses, reducing the state of humankind until it itself desires and asks for shepherds from the 'Light'. The free market, to which the 'Dark Others' almost sacrificed the

WE RUSSIANS ARE ABOVE MONEY

The hero of the cult movie 'Brat 2' – Bagrov – asks a Russian prostitute working in the USA:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| - Listen, what does this 'how are you?' mean?                         | — Слушай, а что такое по-английски «How are you?»        |
| - It means 'how are things?' or 'how do you feel?'.                   | — «Как поживаешь» или «как дела».                        |
| - You mean they really want to know how I am?                         | — А им че, всем интересно как у меня дела?               |
| - Nope. They don't.   | — Не-а, не интересно.                                    |
| - So why do they ask?   | — А че тогда спрашивают?                                 |
| - Just like that. Everything's 'just like that' here... except money. | — Просто так. Здесь вообще все просто так – кроме денег. |



## analysis

whole people, is confronted by the imperial idea of the 'divine right of kings', the outcome of which is determined not by analysis but by arcane knowledge not available to the majority.

In the wake of the 'Watch' films came a number of blockbusters – *1612*, *The Ninth Company* and *Taras Bulba* – which underlined that loyalty to the state was not only more important than money, but more important than any other value, regardless of what the state demands of the individual. Service to the state alone, even if it costs one one's life, purifies and saves the soul. However, this is moving on to another topic entirely...

## MASS CULTURE AS MORAL SHOCK ABSORBER

The stabilisation of peripheral capitalism in Russia and the renaissance of the bureaucracy require a change of attitudes within popular culture. Of course, money remains the main incentive. However, if one believes in righteous ideals, one can pursue money in good conscience, employing the internal justification 'but I also love' or 'but I also support the patriotic course of those in power'. One

of popular culture's goals is to allow the individual to pursue his or her mercantile interests without the guilty conscience that a more sophisticated and less popular culture would instil. The audience receives the right to submit themselves to the search for money because they identify themselves with the 'other' heroes of the cinema, allowing them, by proxy, to know the more important things in life – love, friendship and power. The abstract ideas that 'some things are more important than money' and 'not everything can be bought' allow the viewers to subordinate themselves completely to the logic of the market in real life.

*Translated from the Russian*

*by Christopher Gilley*

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Alexei Tsvetkov is a writer, critic, freelance journalist and socio-political activist. He also works as the editor for and organiser of cooperative bookshops. Among his recent works are 'Barricades in my Life' (Yekaterinburg, 2005) and 'Diary of an Urban Partisan' (Moscow, 2008).

## MONEY IN THE VERNACULAR. A PROVERBIAL TREASURE CHEST

*Yelena Zhigarina, Jakob Fruchtmann*

'He who comes to us with the rouble, dies by the rouble'. (1)

## sidelight

'MONEY CANNOT BUY HAPPINESS...'<sup>1</sup>

Contempt for base Mammon is a central element of the Russian tradition. It is reflected in a wealth of proverbs and sayings. Poverty guarantees not only a clear conscience but also a safer life: 'You sleep easier without money' (2) or 'No thief sets foot in an empty mansion' (3) – no doubt a com-

forting thought for those in want of money.

However, at the same time, no one claims that it is possible to do without money: 'Count every penny and the family will have plenty' (4). The thrift recommended here is testimony to the fact that a lack of money was a common experience in Russia. Though money is an evil, it is also a necessary one; therefore, one rouble more cannot do any harm: 'One coin more won't burn a hole in your pockets' (5). According to popular tradition, however,

<sup>1</sup> The following article is based on idioms used in colloquial language recorded by Y. Zhigarina over many years. A list of sources can be found in the original version.

sidelight

too much of a good thing is also dangerous: ‘Rags and riches are close neighbours’ (6).

However, popular wisdom does not reveal at what point the ‘ruinous’ avarice begins (7) or the expensive miserliness (8) ends, nor what sum exactly represents the golden mean. We only know that this golden mean ‘pays off’.

These pieces of wisdom could shed light on a multitude of lives and social circumstances. Nevertheless, the transformation in money’s socio-economic role has also left its mark on the world of Russian proverbs: new sayings are appearing, some which had almost been forgotten have been revived, old ones are being changed and all are used creatively, spontaneously and in new and innovative ways.

...ONLY LARGE AMOUNTS OF MONEY CAN.’

Since the 1990s, money in Russia has been seen less as a necessary evil and more as a value in itself (see the box, ‘money is power’). Contemporary *nonce phrases*, i.e. invented phrases that are not expected to reoccur, provide ample evidence that the meaning of money has fundamentally changed

as a result of the transition: ‘Cash conquers all’ (9). A woman in Ulyanovsk argued: ‘People just say that money cannot buy happiness. In reality, that’s exactly what it does’ (10).

There are also idiomatic sayings concerning the relationship between time and money, the abstract, impersonal and antagonistic character of monetary relations, and the social hierarchy, now irrevocably measured in money.

A) TIME IS MONEY

Time is also money in Russian. The importance of a high rate of turnover for making money soon became both an urgent concern and a platitude as hyperinflation caused the cost of a product to rise a hundredfold between morning and evening and savings lost their value. Consequently, one often encounters this saying, which is also used unironically:

Two women meet each other. 1<sup>st</sup> woman: ‘We still have half an hour’. 2<sup>nd</sup> woman: ‘That’s also money!’. 1<sup>st</sup> woman: ‘You mean ‘time’?’ 2<sup>nd</sup> woman: ‘Time is money’. (11)

However, the relationship between time and money is not clear to everyone, for example when the traditionally most important currency of barter – a bottle of vodka – is given a monetary value:

In a nightclub, two tipsy men lock a woman in the toilets and refuse to let her out without payment: ‘Get us a bottle of vodka! Time is money! An hour’s a litre!’. ‘And how am I going to buy vodka in the toilet?’, she asks (12).

B) NEVER MIX MONEY AND FRIENDSHIP

The abstract, impersonal and antagonistic nature of monetary



Money, Power and the People. Money displays a rude gesture meaning ‘Nothing’ (appr. ‘Sod all is what you’re getting’). Source: [http://www.lunet-msk.ru/details.php?image\\_id=8142](http://www.lunet-msk.ru/details.php?image_id=8142)

sidelight

relationships is also expressed in the use of proverbs. Money and friendship are two things that should never be mixed:

Two friends have pooled some money to buy a present for a third. The first woman says: 'I owe you 5 roubles, 50 kopeks'. The second replies: 'Don't worry about it; it's not important'. The first retorts: 'You don't know anything about life. Friendship is friendship and money is money' (13).

As soon as money comes into the picture, one is reminded of the less friendly sides of human relationships. A young man, on hearing a story from a friend about how she surreptitiously picked up the money that someone had dropped in front of her, responded thus: 'Well done – man is wolf to man, and wolf is man to wolf' (14).

A person's value can also be measured in money. After concocting some profound epigrams on honour and conscience, a jobless drunk from the provincial town of Bologoe summed it up thus: 'If you've got money, you're Dick Whittington; if you haven't you're just a d...' (15).

c) 'THERE'S NO DISGRACE IN POVERTY; IT'S JUST A DAMN SHAME'

Some time was needed before it became common knowledge that the injunction of the 1990s to 'enrich yourselves!' was not really aimed at everyone and that the hopes of quick riches in the early 1990s were, on the whole, illusory. During a lecture on sociology in 2002 in Ulyanovsk, the lecturer said: 'The classes are differentiated by control over the means of production. So, in the past, we said: 'I am the boss and you are the chump; if you are the boss, I am the chump'. Today, we say: 'I am the

owner and you are the chump; if I don't have any property, I am the chump' (16).

Poverty now seemed to be an inevitability ordained by fate. Proverbs describing money as the prerequisite for making more money became increasingly popular. However, now they underline the difficulty of escaping poverty:

One woman put it thus: 'My daughter doesn't like housework – washing and ironing are not her thing. She says that later we'll have a maid. I say to her that'll be nice if your dream comes true. But, how do they put it? Poverty comes to the poor and riches to the rich' (17).

A young man thinks a little and says: 'Money – now that's something: today, you have none, and tomorrow, you also don't have any' (18).

Contrary to rumour, it is not a 'typically Russian' characteristic to romanticise a lack of money:

A brother and sister are talking. He says: 'That watch you bought as a wedding present for your friend is a pile of crap'. She replies: 'You what? I spent half a month's wages on it, and you say...?'. He says: 'Ach. There's no disgrace in poverty; it's just a damn shame. Don't worry about it; it's going to be OK' (19).

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APPENDIX: RUSSIAN VERSION

1. Кто к нам с рублем придет, тот от рубля и погибнет.
2. Без денег крепче спится.

3. В пустую хоромину вор не полезет.
4. Копейка к копейке – проживет и семейка.
5. Лишняя денежка не продырявит кармана.

## sidelight

6. Избытку убожество ближний сосед.
7. Жадность фраера губит. (Eng. Greed can kill)
8. Скупой платит дважды. (Eng. The miser pays twice)
9. Бабло побеждает зло. (23.03.2005. Москва)
10. Ж 1 (46) рассуждает: Это только говорят, что не в деньгах счастье, именно в них и есть. (19.07.2001. Ульяновск)
11. Ж 1: Нам осталось полчаса. – Ж 2: Это тоже деньги! – Ж 1: Ты хотела сказать – время? – Ж 2: Время – деньги! (20.09.1999. Ульяновск)
12. Разговор посетителей. У Ж (20) дорогая шапка. Её сопровождающая М (21) и М (20), слегка пьяные, затолкали играючи девушку в туалет, отняли у неё шапку. Ж колотит кулаками в дверь, кричит: – Отдайте мне шапку! Пустите! – М 1: За водкой беги! Время – деньги, час – литр. – Ж: И как я в туалете водку куплю? // 29.01.2004. (Ночной клуб «К-16», г. Москва)
13. Разговор подруг: – Ж 1 (22): Тань, я истратила на поздравление девять рублей, короче, по четыре пятьдесят с каждой. Итого я тебе должна пять пятьдесят. – Ж 2 (22): Да ладно! Не надо! – Ж 3 (21): Ничего ты в жизни не понимаешь! Дружба дружбой, а деньги врозь! (04.10.2002. Ульяновск)
14. «Ну, да, – правильно: человек человеку волк, а волк волку человек.» (в поезде, Москва, 11.11.2004.).
15. Ж (26): Нет разницы, какого ранга! Ранг – что такое...? Есть ранг у человека... М 1 (45): Есть – совесть! Правильно я ответил? – Ж : Да. Так я считаю. Пусть богатый, бедный, администратор или... олигарх... - М 1: Да. Ты имей честь! Совесть, честь – это одно и тоже. Правильно? – М 2 (45): Совесть – честь нашей эпохи. – М 1: Деньги есть – товарищ Носов, денег нет – носатый... (январь 2004. Из фонда М.В. Ахметовой; г. Бологое)
16. Лекция по социологии. Преподаватель - М (40): – Классы различаются по наличию-отсутствию собственности на средства производства. Раньше было: я начальник – ты дурак, ты начальник – я дурак, а сейчас: я собственник – ты дурак, нет у меня собственности – я дурак. (17.06.2002. Ульяновск)
17. Ж 1 (48) рассказывает о дочери: – Вот она у меня тоже: стирать-гладить – это не!.. Она говорит: у нас домработница будет!.. Да!.. А я ей говорю: это хорошо, если мечта твоя сбудется!.. А оно же как? Бедный – к бедному, а богатый – к богатому. (09.07.2005. «Москва-Бугульма», плацкартный вагон)
18. М (после молчания в 20 секунд): Деньги – это вещь такая: сегодня их нет, а завтра – их тоже нет... (20.02.2003.; БО-90; г. Ульяновск)
19. Разговор брата и сестры. – М (26): Куда это ты эти часы купила? – Ж (21): Подруге на свадьбу. – М: Тогда – херовенькие. – Ж: Ну, вот!.. Ползарплаты отдала, а ты говоришь... – М: Да... Бедность – не порок, а большое свинство. Ничего, не расстраивайся. И так сойдёт. (17.06.2001. Ульяновск)

## READING SUGGESTION (IN RUSSIAN):

Гасан Гусейнов, «ДСП», Москва 2003 + 2004 (изд-во: Три квадрата – ISBN 5-94607-027-4 + 5-94607-024-X)

- Т.1 «ДСП / Материалы к русскому словарю общественно-политического языка XX века» [см. статью рваный (455–456), география (94), баксы, баксоиды, баксообладатели (43–44), зеленые, деревянные];
- Т.2 «ДСП. Советские идеологемы в русском дискурсе 90-х» [параграф «Имена денег» (с. 94–96)] [http://www.speakrus.ru/gg/gus\\_tom-1-14-10td.pdf](http://www.speakrus.ru/gg/gus_tom-1-14-10td.pdf)

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## sidelight

FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM:

We thank you for your kind donations, which show your interest in the continued publication of *kultura*. At the moment, there is no long-term security; we are still looking for a permanent sponsor. We are currently planning a further issue of *kultura* for October. It will present images of fascism in contemporary Russian culture.