

# Alexey Iorsh

15 July 2010

## “Kind awareness”

There is an inner child in every one. There is no human being that does not hide it inside, for the human would not be alive. Even if the man is a tyrant, a dictator, the very same old child presides over his raging and murderous life. It is looking through his adult eyes unwittingly. It looks from the inside – with interest and surprise. And it is this child that suffers from the world’s injustice, its losses and its toughness during life’s long course, afflicted and enforced. Whoever the adult is, whatever he is doing, the child on the inside still suffers and still watches the outside with gentleness and silent questions.

It may be that from the outside the latest USSR looked like the Evil Empire. Yet there was another view – the view from the inside. And from that point of view many children of the country believed that the country was all normal, that they were living in a kind, sunny world, immune to any hardness of real life, for someone really good and strong was ever protecting them. They believed that the rules and prescriptions were all true and the recipes of their future happiness were at hand. This integral and shared view, this common childhood, whence all their lives proceeded, is an important aspect that explains the following frustration of many ex-soviet people, when placed under the capitalist condition. They just couldn’t really get it – what was wrong? Young pioneers for example were taught to be honest, just, straight and kind – is it that bad? Yet all these qualities turned out to be unclaimed for after the arrival of the new reality. They even became destructive for all those who had to survive in it.

Actually it is not just an ex-Soviets’ problem. – Men and women of any culture and national legacy may have problems when faced with the basic conflict between the ethical principles they learn at home, at schools and religious institutes and the bare and challenging realities of the mature world. The Soviet system was just one of the most obvious examples of this old story, perhaps because in many ways the so called “Evil Empire”, the USSR did function like an eternal kindergarten for all those locked inside of it.

Should we use force to ban that kind of frustration? Should we write laws and new prescriptions saying “grow up” to everyone who is not answering to the standard? Should we just kill that inner child for it’s stubborn naivete? Actually not. We must help him grow up and even become wise in those parts it should, and letting it stay a child in those parts it needs. It is not the force of prescription and law but something more like the Buddhist practice of “kind awareness” that is of great demand. We must teach our inner children to grow, nursing each other with all our parental love. And when by the end we shall see that we all are children and parents to each other, we shall also see that in sustaining those inner children within each other lies our only hope of survival and decent life. In his paintings the Russian, or rather ex-Soviet artist Alexey Iorsh tries to watch for this inner child in all his characters. He watches it without any moral indignation, yet only with compassion.

