

# Strong Emotions, Weak Subjects. On the Role of Hurt Feelings in the Trial against Pussy Riot

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On 17 August 2012, three members of the female activist collective ‘Pussy Riot’, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, Maria Alyokhina, and Yekaterina Samutsevich, were found guilty of “hooliganism on the basis of religious hatred” under paragraph 213, part 2 of the Russian Criminal Code. They were each sentenced for two years in prison camps; Samutsevich was later released on probation. The defendants were judged for a performance they staged at the Cathedral of Christ the Savior on 21 February 2012. Wearing colored masks, four members of the group danced and sang at the ambo of Russia’s most important Russian Orthodox Church. Immediately after the performance the material was used to compose a music video entitled “Punk Prayer—Mother of God, Chase Putin Away!” including some other scenes with one more group member that were filmed at the Epiphany Cathedral at Yelokhovo, also in Moscow. In the text of the “Punk Prayer”, Pussy Riot criticized the close connection between the Russian Orthodox Church and the state, and Patriarch Kirill’s support for Putin during the presidential election campaign.

In the very public and controversial trial that took place in August 2012, the issue of “hurt feelings” played a central role and was emphasized in every speech: The statements of the injured party in the court—the believers; the indictment, blaming the group members of religious hatred; and in the almost three-hour verdict of guilt.

The trial marked the culmination of a long, ongoing conflict between Russian Orthodoxy and secular subjects. Until this incident, it had mostly taken place within the sphere of art. The first remarkable event in this respect was Avdey Ter-Oganyan’s performance “Поп-арт” (Pop-art), which took place during winter 1998 within the project “Юный безбожий” (Yunyy bezbozhiy—The Young Godless). At the International Art Fair ‘ArtManezh’ in Moscow, Ter-Oganyan had sold desecrations of copies of icons. This openly proclaimed blasphemy led to an indictment against the artist on grounds of violation of paragraph 282 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. It was submitted by state authorities as a reaction to “multiple complaints of Orthodox believers”. Here, for the first time, blunt blasphemy took place in the field of the art, and was persecuted on behalf of believers claiming that their religious feelings were hurt. Almost the same happened in 2000 when Oleg

Mavromati, in an action titled “Не верь глазам” (Ne ver’ glazam—Don’t Trust Your Eyes) allowed himself to be crucified in the courtyard of the Institute of Cultural Studies in Moscow, close to the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, with a notice on his back stating “Я не сын божий” (Ya ne syn bozhiy—I’m not the son of God). This inversion of the archetypal blasphemy in the history of Christianity, Jesus’ claim of being God’s son, was again prosecuted by the state. After some other minor incidents, in 2005 two of the curators of the exhibition “Осторожно, религия” (Ostorozhno, religiya—Beware, Religion) were convicted under paragraph 282. They were found guilty of inciting religious hatred, because the exhibition had been attacked by Orthodox radicals.

The persecution of blasphemous art reached a new peak in 2006, with the trial against the curators of the exhibition “Запретное искусство” (Zapretnoye iskusstvo—Forbidden Art). The exhibition gathered works of art that had been banned from public display during the course of 2006, which were then placed behind a large wooden fence with just a few peepholes to look at them. Again, the curators Yuri Samodurov and Andrei Yerofeyev were charged with incitement of hatred against church and state.

Public attention towards such religion-related events had continuously grown, but with the appearance of the punk performance video and the indictment against the members of Pussy Riot, it reached a new peak. What Pussy Riot had done was to bring the conflict between art and religion from the sphere of the art into the very heart of religious life in Russia. No other place in the whole country is more symbolic for the Russian Orthodox tradition than the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. Built 1883 and destroyed just forty years later on Stalin’s command, the Cathedral was finally reconstructed in 1997. It immediately became a very visible symbol of Russia’s imperial strength, Orthodoxy’s post-Soviet revival, and Moscow’s special place in the spiritual life, and recently has become a quite controversial building<sup>1</sup>.

Our article wishes to contribute to the understanding of the significance of the performance—and especially the subsequent trial that was held against the band members—by exploring the subject of “hurt feelings”, that was central in this trial. It will pursue the question of the relationship between obvious and hidden meanings and functions within the discourse on emotions, as well its intended and unintended effects. By doing so, we hope to contribute to a deeper understanding of the present-day role of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) in Russia’s political and social life. We suggest that, by virtue of its potential to address and express

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1 Zoe Knox has recently called the Cathedral of Christ the Savior a “testament to the intersection of church and state” (Knox 2004:121), and Alek Epshtein has given an in-depth-analysis of the cathedral’s economic functionalization, which, as Pussy Riot members claim, became a central point of criticism in their performance (Epshtein 2012).

emotions, religion serves as an ideal craft to incite feelings. This potential is used extensively under the circumstances of the strong alliance between church and state that we are witnessing today. By analyzing how this is happening, we aim to provide an assessment of the politics of emotion in present-day Russia, and of how public discourses and politics in general become emotionally charged along with the aggravation of the political situation.

### **Blasphemy and the Law**

To fully comprehend the fundamental role played by hurt feelings in the trial against Pussy Riot as well as in the other recent cases, one must consider their role in Russia's juridical system. There are three paragraphs relevant in such cases. The first is Article 5.26 (2) of the Russian Code of Administrative Offences (KoAP), dealing with the offence of "insulting the religious feelings of citizens or desecration of artifacts, symbols, and emblems of doctrinal significance". The second is Article 282 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. This article sanctions "Actions aimed at the incitement of hatred or enmity, as well as abasement of dignity of a person or a group of persons on the basis of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, attitude to religion, as well as affiliation to any social group". These articles formed the basis for sentencing the curators of the 2005 exhibition "Осторожно, религия" (Ostorozhno, religiya—Beware, Religion) as well as artists in other infamous cases. It would also have been consistent to apply it in the trial against Pussy Riot; however, the court instead referred to Article 213 of the Criminal Code. In her consideration of the trial, Caroline von Gall rightly points out that this is to be understood as an even more rigorous handling of the case, because this article bears close reference to the Soviet-era crime of "hooliganism". This adds a strong political note to the case, as "in the Soviet Union, the article was used as a catch-all clause for any type of opposition to the regime" (von Gall 2013:2). According to von Gall, the post-Soviet Criminal Code of 1996 "expressly raised the requirements for convictions of hooliganism due to the problematic history of that article, but reduced them again in the course of the fight against extremism in 2007. Since then, hooliganism consists, amongst other things, of the motivation to political, ideological, racist, nationalist, or religious hatred" (von Gall 2013:3). Observers agree that the differences between the crimes defined in Articles 282 and 213 are quite blurred, and that by applying the latter the court used an opportunity to hand out a more severe punishment aimed at villainizing the band members<sup>2</sup>.

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2 Among the first Russian lawyers to give a critical assessment of the trial and to comment on the efforts being made to turn an administrative offence into a crime, was Genri Reznik, president

A brief comparison between the legal situation we find in Russia and those in other countries illustrates its specific nature. In other countries ‘religious feelings’ are only rarely legally protected by the state anymore. Mostly, they are not considered an entity qualifying as a legally protected good (e.g., Koch 2009:40). In Germany, to name just one example, Article 166 of the Criminal Code does not protect religions themselves or religious feelings, but rather the public peace (Berkmann 2009:19), whereas previous versions of this article both in the German Empire and in the Federal Republic of Germany had still dealt with the crime of a personal offence. This represents a remarkable distinction: an offence against a religious individual subject is not considered a crime nowadays, whereas an offence against the state order by using religion is. From an historical perspective, the shift away from the religious individual to the abstract state order marks the final point of a development that in the literature has been characterized as a secularization of criminal law (Koch 2009:39). Before the Enlightenment, blasphemy had predominantly been understood as an offence against God, the Virgin Mary, or the saints, by either abusing their names or speaking wicked words against them. Therefore, legal codes in countries all over Europe dealt with this crime to protect the Sacred. During the course of the Enlightenment, an alternative understanding of blasphemy became more important, namely the aforementioned attack on believers as citizens. Legal scholars as well as theologians both in Western and Eastern Europe have acknowledged this fact. Sebastian Koch cites German legal scholar Friedrich Carl von Savigny, who in 1848 deduced the importance of blasphemy as an *actus reus* for state policy from the fact that it could cause a severe violation of the religious feelings of a huge part of the nation (Koch 2009:35). This statement serves to underline the interdependence of the emergence of an understanding of blasphemy aimed at individual feelings and the idea of the nation-state<sup>3</sup>.

In Russia, the same shift took place considerably later. Criminal Codes from 1845, as well as succeeding prerevolutionary codes, referred extensively to blasphemy, defining it in the traditional sense as an offence against God, the saints or the Church (Ulozhenie 1845:83 ff.). Soviet law, naturally, did not deal with the crime of blasphemy, and only in the 1990s was the offence included in legal codes—this time in the more believer-orientated versions already mentioned above.

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of the Moscow Chamber of Lawyers (e.g., Reznik 2012).

3 One reason for the changing discourse on blasphemy was, of course, the idea of freedom of religion. In his ‘History of Blasphemy in the Christian World’, David Nash points out that in the West, blasphemy for a very long time only protected Christianity and has almost never been fundamentally scrutinized, whereas in the globalized multicultural present, numerous religions and faiths make a claim to equality before the law, while liberals wish to abolish blasphemy laws to protect the freedom of speech (Nash 2007:6, 24 f.).

## The “Hurt Believer” as a New Legal and Cultural Subject

The ‘hurt believer’ as an individual citizen is therefore a very new phenomenon in Russian legal history that, nevertheless, has very rapidly entered the center of public attention. To properly assess the implications of this development, one should take into account that hurt religious feelings are a highly controversial philosophical, theological, and legal entity. This becomes evident on several levels. First, there is a very fundamental dispute about the meaning that they are ascribed within philosophical and theological discourse since the Enlightenment, especially amongst Protestants. Some, like Immanuel Kant, Baruch Spinoza, Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel, and others, argue for religion as a rational practice and deny that feelings can play a fundamental role in it. Others, like Friedrich Schleiermacher, considered feelings the essence of religion. Secondly, there is a long-running debate over the existence of ‘religious feelings’ as a distinct category, as well as their specifics. Those who claim the existence of religious feelings in the philosophical and theological discourse often discuss their meaning in the context of ‘religious experience’. Referring to Christian mysticism, these concepts aim to deconstruct the dichotomy of reason and emotion. According to Rudolf Otto, for example, feelings are not to be misunderstood as pure reactions to stimulants. Instead, they are to be seen as a medium of cognition, namely the cognition of the numinous. Due to of their unique reference, there can be proposed a qualitative difference between natural and religious feelings.

Others, like American philosopher and psychologist William James, deny the existence of such a qualitative difference, claiming that there is no abstract “religious emotion” that exists as a distinct mental affection by itself: “There is religious fear, religious love, religious awe, religious joy, and so forth. But religious love is only man’s natural emotion of love directed to a religious object” (James 1982:27). Naturally, the question of the existence of Orthodox feelings is currently a highly controversial issue amongst Orthodox theologians. In an effort to demonstrate the existence of religious feelings, the ROC has recently made frequent reference to scholars who engage a natural scientific point of view, such as Fedor Kondratev, a physician and psychiatrist. In his “Мы рождаемся с чувством бога” (My rozhdaemysya s chuvstvom boga—We are born with a sense of God), Kondratev gives a psychiatric explanation for the phenomenon, going back to the history of psychiatry and citing 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian psychiatrist Sergey Korsakov, who claimed that religious feelings are among basic anthropological feelings. From his psychological perspective, even atheism is to be considered an expression of religious feelings, namely a manifestation of repressed religious feelings (Kondratev 2012). Opponents like Jakov Krotov, liberal nonconformist priest of the Ukrainian Independent Orthodox Church, consider religious feelings an invention from people who are

far from religion (выдумка далёких от религии людей—vydumka dalokikh ot religii lyudey)<sup>4</sup>. He states: “A religious person has exactly the same emotions as a non-religious one—the same mechanisms of perceptions; the same motivations. The encounter with God, the belief in Him does not produce any new emotions, but liberates the normal emotions, gives them the opportunity to endless growth. (...) What is usually understood by the expression ‘hurt religious feelings’ is the normal feeling (emotion) of anxiety”<sup>5</sup>.

Given the controversial views on the existence of religious feelings, it seems even more difficult to define the characteristics of ‘hurt religious feelings’. When reflecting on this topic, Viktor W. Weichbold suggests that religious education to a large part serves the development and cultivation of emotions. Religious narratives, rituals, beliefs, and ideals are highly charged emotionally<sup>6</sup>. When those values and traditions are suddenly treated without respect and/or without the usual emotional attitude, this can be understood as an offense, causing a negative emotional reaction towards persons who downgrade religious symbols or items (Weichbold 2007:6 ff.).

This means that there are two aspects of ‘hurt religious feelings’. First, they occur when, for example, during the performance of a religious ritual the feelings that are experienced in this moment, such as awe or humility, are deformed by unwanted disruptions. Secondly, those disruptions, when regarded as an offence, cause negative emotions directed against the offender. Those two phenomena find their reflection in the wording of the law, which names the insult of religious feelings (Article 5.26 (2) of the Russian Code of Administrative Offences, see above) as well as the incitement of hatred or enmity (Article 282 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, see above). As will be described later, this double meaning becomes quite important during the Pussy Riot trial.

The latest trials have served to greatly establish a subject identified by its hurt

4 An invention made by people who are far from religion.

5 У религиозного человека все те же чувства, что у ‘обычного’. Те же механизмы восприятия, те же эмоции, те же мотивации. Встреча с Богом, вера в Бога не порождает никакого нового чувства, а лишь высвобождает обычные чувства, открывает им возможность для бесконечного роста. (...) То, что обычно подразумевают под ‘оскорблённым религиозным чувством’ есть обычное чувство (эмоция) тревожности.

6 It may be mentioned in this context, that this is a core argument in the discussion evolving around the existence and specifics of religious feelings: Religious feelings representing a specific state of mind, emerging in a specific religious setting. This adds an understanding of a specific intensity of religious feelings, often believed to be higher than the average of natural feelings. As Friedrich Schleiermacher puts it in his “Über die Religion. Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern”, asserting that the original task of religion is to stir up emotions in the highest direction (Schleiermacher 1995:132 note 4, 64).

religious feelings in the public spirit. To focus on this aspect means to add another perspective to the assessment of those events, because: in the past, trials of artists and curators on the grounds of violation of Article 282 have mostly been regarded as efforts to restrain the freedom of artistic expression or, to put it in more general terms, the freedom of speech; and as a sign of an ongoing aggravation of the political climate (e.g., Frimmel 2013). In this context, observers have frequently referred to such events as ‘show trials’. Sandra Frimmel placed the trial of the curators of the show ‘Forbidden Art’, that took place in 2006, within the context of the Soviet tradition of staged trials, considering both the early Soviet tradition of ‘agitsudy’ and the infamous political show trials against various ‘enemies within’ during the Stalinist era, rightly stating that present-day trials serve the same function: to model an “inner enemy”, supposedly acting against the Russian People and state (Frimmel 2013:257)<sup>7</sup>. In this context, the theatricality of those trials is of special significance. As performative spectacles, they serve two functions: first, to produce certain types by means of judicial performative speech acts; and secondly, to present those types to the public. In this context it is important to note that the morally corrupt or depraved inner enemy (of an artist in the former trials; and of liberal, feminist, Western-orientated women in the case against Pussy Riot) is not the only type that is being canonized. The trial deals not only with the offender, but also with the offended. Legal scholars have repeatedly pointed out that the extent to which the court referred to the witnesses’ accounts in the trial against Pussy Riot as well as in other trials is quite remarkable and contradicts established judicial standards. Nevertheless, beyond legal considerations, this fact bears a broader significance: hurt believers are more than a medium in the line of juridical argumentation, but a self-contained model for identity-building.

As already mentioned, this type obtained a sort of tradition during recent years. It made a very strong entrance in the trial against the curators of “Осторожно, религия” (Ostorozhno, religiya—Beware, Religion) in 2005. That trial marked the first climax of the ongoing conflict between the ideal of freedom of artistic expression and the rights and interests of the ROC and Orthodox believers. Various expert assessments gave interpretations of the art works that aimed to reveal their shocking and demeaning estrangement of religious motifs and symbols, and

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7 Considering the popularity of the analogy it is, however, important to point out a significant difference between the contemporary trials and the Stalinist show-trials. While in Stalinist times, the focus was on the presentation of the figure of the enemy and the performance of his repentance and subjugation under Soviet rule, contemporary trials can not be designed on this premise. Here, the accused usually remain resistant, and no confessions or self-abnegations can be expected. Therefore, the staging of victims becomes an even more important strategy to prove the danger presented by the inner enemy.

numerous witness accounts that were cited at length during the verdict placed a strong emphasis on the shocking impression made on them by the confrontation with the artistic works both in the press and in the gallery. In his account of the trial, Mikhail Ryklin has impressively described the heated atmosphere in the court room, where Orthodox believers constituted a majority of the audience, supporting the witnesses who made their statements (Ryklin 2006). In those statements, the master-plot of hurt feelings was established and extensively repeated, consisting mainly of accounts of the overwhelming effects of perceived or manifest insult or offence. We will return to similar statements discussing the trial of Pussy Riot.

As soon as the ‘hurt believer’ emerged as a legal subject, critics began to raise questions and doubts regarding its authenticity—and those doubts turned out to be credible. In this context, the remarkable campaign conducted during the trial of the curators of “Forbidden Art” is very revealing. During the examination trial, the civic organization “Гражданская оборона” (Grazhdanskaya oborona—Civic Defense) launched an appeal on its website calling all compassionates to participate as witnesses to the offence, and supplying a specimen letter of complaint to the public prosecution office. This specimen, containing a type of a ‘master-plot’ for the self-expression of a believer whose religious feelings were hurt, could easily be adopted by individuals. Remarkably, having visited the exhibition was not a condition for qualifying as a witness; it was deemed sufficient to be outraged simply by the show’s existence.

Sandra Frimmel gives a description of how representatives of the organization “Civic Defense” helped volunteers to prepare their testimonies by providing notepads to be used while giving their testimonies, pointing out that this resulted in numerous entirely identical testimonies that were obviously not autonomous, authentic accounts but appropriated ones (Frimmel 2013:152 ff.).

This obviously very much resembles the Soviet method of systematically encouraging and demanding statements from the population on all kinds of topics, and subsequently using these to stage political discussions. Back then it was an important propaganda tool, serving to mobilize the population, and a means to legitimate hegemonic policies by suggesting that they were nothing but the execution of public political intent<sup>8</sup>. From the perspective of a political analysis this is, of course, a characteristic of authoritarian politics. However, when understanding court trials as a “generator of autobiographies” (Autobiographiegenerator) (Hahn 1987:12), an institution that engages in encouraging and controlling the emergence and production of identity-building, these discourses and utterances can also be read

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8 In the Putin–Medvedev era, this tradition was revived, manifested, among other things, in staged TV press consultations given by the president.

as an attempt to launch a specific pattern of identity. This pattern of an emotionally charged, hurt, and outraged believer has become highly productive in the last couple of years. It is now to be considered a core element in the contribution of the ROC to the discourse on Russian national identity.

It is obvious that in the trial against Pussy Riot as in the previous trials, the hurt believer occupies the center stage. Throughout the trial, the judge systematically ruled out any reference to politics, refused to listen to arguments demonstrating the performance's political character, and dismissed questions by advocates during questioning that related to politics, e.g., about the political content of the lyrics of the Punk Prayer (which, incidentally, was not admitted as a piece of evidence). Legal scholars have pointed out that in its verdict, the court placed remarkable reliance on expert opinions, and the testimonies of the offended and witnesses for the prosecution. The same is true for the indictment, which bears a stunning resemblance to the verdict in the passages citing the testimonies. Obviously, this is not explained by any increased obligation to demonstrate the significance and depth of the offence in the light of a very liberal context, which emphasizes the importance of protecting free speech<sup>9</sup>. Instead, the aim is to produce a performance, and later a text, consisting of recurrent, serial expressions of hurt feelings<sup>10</sup>.

### **Emotions and the Idea of the Nation-State**

The reinvention of a coherent and hegemonic Russian national identity after the demise of the Soviet Union became a fundamental project of Russian politics in the Putin–Medvedev era. It is a well-known and widely discussed fact that the ROC plays a leading role in this process of national resurrection, as the Orthodox belief is considered to be a core element of Russian national identity. Numerous scholars have examined how the ROC benefits from this situation, in which it has been ascribed an absolutely dominant position in the nominally secular Russian

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9 See Nash (2007:24), who notes that the level of need to justify accusation of blasphemy underlies change and depends on the importance given to the issue of tolerance of speech.

10 The authenticity of those testimonies has been repeatedly contested, as were those given during other religion-related trials (see above). Advocates for the defense tried to prove that one of the witnesses, named Istomin, a member of the extremely traditionalist citizens' movement Народный собор (People's Assembly), had already been a witness for the prosecution in the trial against Yuri Samodurov and Andrei Yerofeyev as curators of 'Forbidden Art', and was some kind of 'professional', hired witness. Their objections were dismissed, as was an objection in which the advocate suspected that the witnesses' statements were actually not written by themselves, but by some other person, which was indicated by identical spelling mistakes occurring in every statement (Morgan 2012:47).

Federation (e.g., Krindatch 2006). The same can be said about the long Russian tradition of a tight symbiosis between church and state, including a sacralization of power and the byzantine model of “symphony”, a harmonious relationship between the emperor and the patriarch, granting both their specific sphere of influence in the state, thereby virtually eliminating the significance of society as a third, independent sphere (van der Zweerde 2009; Tsybin: Part IV)<sup>11</sup>. It is this very strong alliance that, according to Pussy Riot themselves as well as many observers, was the target of critique of their performance. It is not the aim of this article to comment on this topic any further. However, there is one aspect worth mentioning with reference to the role of religion in national identity-building: that is the conceptualization of states and nations as “affective communities” (Sunny 2009:8 ff.; Sunny 2010:94)<sup>12</sup>. Under this premise, religion as a cultural institution offering highly emotionally charged rituals and practices serves largely to create emotional ties that can be also used in national identity-building. This adds an additional aspect to the question of religious feeling: not only does the attitude towards a sacred sphere or entity stir emotions, but certain collective beliefs and practices also strengthen feelings of emotional belonging. Thus, the emergence of a social function of emotions as described by constructivist sociology comes into focus, and this inevitably implies questions of hierarchy building and power relations. With reference to William Reddy, it can be assumed that the staging of the trial against Pussy Riot as well as the previous court trials are an attempt to establish a specific “emotional regime”, a “set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices, and ‘emotives’ that express and inculcate them; a necessary underpinning of any stable political regime” (Reddy 2001:129). Reddy’s concept, which—as commentators have noted—is designed

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11 It is worth mentioning here that, besides the political ambition of the ROC arising from this situation, there is a broad subculture of politicized Orthodox Christianity in Russia today, political movements based on their own interpretations of the Orthodox doctrine, and not always guided by the ROC. For a detailed assessment of those subcultures, see Mitrofanova, Umland: (2005).

12 Sunny derives this concept from Benedict Anderson’s ‘Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism’ (London /New York: Verso, 1991), citing his argument that “with whom one feels a special bond, a tie of some kind of ‘kinship’ and affection distinct from the feelings one has toward those of other nations. Beyond the actual or fictive kinship of ethnic groups, nations are grounded in imaginative relations of various kinds—common origins and ancestors, common history and destiny, blood or culture, belief in the spiritual unity of a people or commitment to shared political principles that constitute a powerful cultural synthesis. The signs of commonality are also varied, selective, shifting, and often contested: language, religion, somatic features, foods, fashions, patterns of child-raising, appropriate expression of emotion, etc.” (Sunny 2009: 8). Jan Plamper, in his survey of the role of feelings in Russian History, suggests that the idea of the nation as an emotionally cohesive community is characteristic of 19<sup>th</sup> century historical thinking (Plamper 2010:14).

with regard to the nation-state (Plamper 2010:242), is based on the assumption that there are always conflicts between a dominant emotional regime, enforced at the center of power or authority and other, conflicting regimes; and of course, the public demonstration of enforcement serves to underline a hegemonic position. According to Reddy, particularly strict political regimes offer “strong emotional management tools” (Reddy 2001:126), serving to navigate ones feelings according to the rules.

In this sense, the trials can be regarded as show trials, serving two functions: firstly, they are a performance of the dominant emotional regime as they present “feeling rules” (Hochschild 1979:563), and secondly, they utilize the performative potential of the expression of emotions (“emotives”, to put it in Reddy’s terminology) to mobilize the public. The increasing number of Orthodox activists claiming the need to protect religious places and monuments, as well as the increasing sensitivities in general, might serve as an indication of the success these measures have.

### **Who Feels How? Pretensions and Inquiries on Emotions and Subjects**

The ambiguity of hurt religious feelings discussed above, which brings together insult and hatred, becomes highly productive in the trial of Pussy Riot. Although the leitmotif of the hurt believer emphasizes insult, the trial is as much about hatred, as it is about insult. In her analysis of the cultural organization of hate, Sarah Ahmed explores speeches on asylum seekers by members of the Conservative Party in the UK during the early 2000s, suggesting that their rhetoric aimed to generate an imagined subject of the nation (the white man, housewife, and son) who is endangered by imagined others (asylum seekers). Those others then become the object of hate: “Hate generates its objects as a defence against injury” (Ahmed 2004:42). This appears to describe exactly what occurred during the trial of Pussy Riot: It served the organization of religiously motivated hatred via a discourse on emotions. Therefore, naturally, during the trial as well as in the course of the discussion that evolved around it, one central controversial question regarded the nature and types of emotions of those involved in or affected by the performance. In court, the prosecution aimed to demonstrate that the performance was motivated by religious hatred, that religious feelings had been hurt, and religious hatred incited. The defense council initially attempted to state that the performance was not designed as an attack on religion or religious feelings, but as an act of radical political criticism; and secondly contested the witnesses’ credibility, thereby also calling into question the existence of hurt religious feelings and, to some extent, even the existence of religious feelings per se. This results in a highly complex and multilayered rhetoric discourse about the nature of emotions with explicit and implicit religious and political intentions and effects.

As the trial also serves as a cultural institution of subject formation, this discourse on emotions is at the same time a discourse on the Russian citizen as a subject. Therefore, naturally, the legal dispute creates affirmative and negative verbal images of state citizens by ways of the emotions they feel (or pretend to feel), express, or are being ascribed.

So, how are those subjects shown? Although at first glance the members of Pussy Riot seem to be the central figures of this trial, the victims occupy a huge space.

The cross-examination of victims and witnesses takes up much space in the course of the trial and in the trial's paratexts, such as in the indictment, the trial record, and the verdict. This is done in order to ensure that the display of offense becomes evident and picturesque. Therefore the most obvious rhetorical strategy to constitute a picture of subjects offended by blasphemous words and deeds is amplification in its most basic form via serial repetition. This is particularly noteworthy, as it has aroused suspicions regarding the authenticity of the emotions articulated. This happens because of the obvious similarities between the texts aforementioned, but also because we somehow expect an authentic expression of a strong emotion to be individualized, particularly in terms of narrative. When considering the complexity of emotions and their narrative expression, this anticipation is absolutely understandable<sup>13</sup>. The victims' statements as we can read them in the trial record are quite contradictory in this respect: they are apparently simple and redundant, and at the same time highly cohesive and effective in presenting the notion of serious offense. The cross-examinations of all victims and witnesses of the defense follow a standardized form: They start with questions whose purpose is to emphasize the religious faith of the person interrogated. Some of the interrogated respond simply by stating that they try to attend church on a regular basis, pray, and follow all canonical rituals. Afterwards, the cross-examinations continue with questions about the circumstances of the performance in the cathedral. Here, not only do the interrogated recall the course of events, but also make statements about the emotional effect these events had on them. This is where the offense becomes apparent. Of course, the descriptions are to a high degree intentionally predetermined by the lawyers' questions, as they are part of a cross-examination. The cross-examined witnesses follow a specific script of questions and answers that has been prepared during questioning before the trial, rather than unfold their story in the trial situation. Therefore, there are virtually no mimetic representations of the offense. Instead,

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13 See Christiane Voss for an analysis of the complexity of (narrated) emotions. Voss suggests that emotions consist of various components, which have to be synthesized with regard to a specific intention serving as a superstructure. She calls this process a mental "narrative conjunction", and points out that narration becomes relevant on two different levels: Firstly in the mental processing of an emotion, and secondly in the stories we tell about them (Voss 2004:184 ff.).

we find generalizing accounts devoid of any rhetoric elaboration or, conversely, disruptions of a prepared speech like stuttering, stagnation, confused speech, etc.; or by outbursts of emotion (like tears that are being suppressed), which would seem appropriate for an expressive representation of emotions in other contexts and genres, maybe even in the court room. When Lyubov' Aleksandrovna Sokologorska, a then 52-year-old employee working in the Church of Christ the Savior, gives her assessment of the Pussy Riot members' actions and behavior in the cathedral, she states as follows:

This impudent, profane behavior violated the visitor's right to turn to God in prayer. Me and the gatekeepers take care to ensure there is quiet in the church, so that everybody can pray (...) I tried to expel them. Tolokonnikova and the unrecognized person in the red dress clearly worked for the camera. For me as an Orthodox believer, this was very insulting; it hurt my emotions of faith, my ideals, myself as a person, and my choice; this is blasphemy (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:78)<sup>14</sup>.

After being asked by the prosecutor whether she had seen the internet video, she states:

The first thing I was astonished about was that everything was combined. I want to point to the dynamics this had when those pieces were torn and repeated. I think it was one of their goals: to incite the believer's spite/rage. The defendants' actions were very insulting—they caused me huge moral pain; this pain is lasting and will not go away (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:78)<sup>15</sup>.

This statement is by no means accomplished by emotional distance towards the described matter. When asked what where the exact words of the piece Pussy Riot performed, she refuses to repeat them, assuring that this would mean to commit the sin of blasphemy herself, but instead repeatedly describes her affectionate relationship towards sanctuaries and sacred sites. In the low rhetoric of the accounts of both victims and witnesses, mentions of emotional turmoil and agitation sometimes appear strangely misplaced, more so because they appear in the form of concise

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14 Такими дерзкими, кощунственными действиями было нарушено право прихожан обратиться с молитвой. Мы с охранником поддерживаем, чтобы в храме была тишина чтобы у всех была возможность помолиться. Все были в шоке. (...) Я пыталась их вытеснить. Толоконникова и неопознанная в красном платье работали четко на камеру. Для меня как православной верующей это очень оскорбительно, это оскорбление моего чувства веры, идеалов, меня как личности и моего выбора, это кощунство.

15 Первое чему я удивилась, что все было представленно комбинированно. Я отмечу динамику, когда рвались и повторялись эти куски. Вызвать злость у верующих, думаю, было одной из их целей. Действия подсудимых для меня оскорбительны, их действия мне причинили огромный моральный вред, эта боль непроходящая.

answers to very precise and obviously intentional questions. Sokologorskaya's statements may serve as an example for that, as do many others. Denis Istomin is one of the most infamous figures among the aggrieved parties, because defense lawyers demonstrated that he was obviously a professional, appointed witness, although the judge did not acknowledge this proof. Istomin states in his account: "A shock, I experienced a very severe emotional turmoil, and I do not consider myself a sentimental person"<sup>16</sup> (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:84). Additionally, victim Vasilii Tsyganyuk, a then 40-year-old employee at the church, when being asked if he had suffered mentally after the incident, answers: "My heart was in a heavy state"<sup>17</sup> (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:90). There are only two victims, whose depictions of their perception of the situation and their assessment during questioning are slightly more elaborated. The first is given by Pavel Zhelezov, a graduate from the priest seminary who at the time of the incident worked in the Cathedral as an altar boy. His depiction, respectively the difference between his depiction and those of the others, illustrates the range of possible expressions under the given circumstances and underlines the passivity and conventionalism of those given by the other victims and witnesses. Apart from the fact that those victims choose some slightly more elaborate wordings and a rhetoric of amplification, the main effect of their rhetoric is that they succeed in condensing the 'master-plot' of offense:

**State prosecutor Nikofonov:** Would you say that such a behavior can be considered blasphemy?

**Offended:** Yes, you cannot do this. I was afraid that they might go to the altar, and the altar is the most sacred spot, the most sacred spot in the church; and even more so, I had to resist them so there would not be any worse harm. (...) After those incidents I was very concerned. Those actions touched my religious feelings to the depth of my soul, it was a pain in the soul, because all the innermost things which are holy for me in life, were trampled upon. Those actions clearly showed contempt for the Orthodox traditions and Orthodox believers; everything was very clear and understandable: it was obvious enmity and hostility. I remember particularly the movements of the hands, like fists frontwards. Later, I saw the video-clip on the internet, I don't remember when, but of course, I didn't watch it until the end: this was so dirty—the clip did not match what had happened in the church; (...). This insulted me and demeaned me. The sense of the song's lyrics insults the feelings of believers, because it used holy words, for example the Blessed Virgin, in a profane context. I heard something like that in church singing [but] this song was a parody on the service, but you cannot com-

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16 Шок, я испытал сильнейшее эмоциональное потрясение, я не могу отнести себя к сентиментальным людям.

17 На душе было тяжелое состояние.

pare this to the singing in a service. Those actions in the church instigate hate and enmity towards the Orthodox believers in the church, and no acquaintance of mine approved—some resented it (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:99)<sup>18</sup>.

This master-plot consists of several elements, representing the components of a complex emotional experience. This shows that the accounts, though very simple in terms of rhetoric, are very well constructed in terms of the semantics of representation of emotion. In her intentional theory of components of emotions, Christiane Voss defines four main components of any genuine emotion: 1) an intentional one (meaning cognitive, evaluative and imaginative representations); 2) a behavioral one, covering both physical expression and verbal or other acts; 3) a physical-perceptive component (meaning sensations, including sensations of physical changes); and 4) a hedonistic component (Voss 2004:184). The cross-examinations of the victims are organized in such a way that they can be summed up to a coherent verbal representation of offense. This becomes particularly apparent in the verdict. Here, every given victim account contains all of the aforementioned components defining emotions: Every account tells us that the victims have experienced certain physical sensations like a pain in the heart or some other inner pain, a shock, anxiety, and so on. They identified these sensations as being caused by an offense they suffered, by hatred with which they were confronted, and by hatred they felt towards their offenders. Furthermore, the victims' narratives contain explanations and evaluations of the offense (and the hatred) and depictions of the ways the incident made them react according to ruling conventions and circumstances. This includes an important hedonistic aspect: The victims consider their feelings and the expression of their feelings to be perfectly appropriate. One might even suggest that the victims derive

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18 Государственный обвинитель Никифоров: Подобное поведение можно назвать кошунством? – Потерпевший: Да, такое непозволительно совершать. Я боялся, что они взойдут в алтарь, а алтарь это самое святое место, главное место в храме, тем более, чтобы не сотворилось худшего зла, я должен был этому воспрепятствовать. (...) После всех эти событий я сильно переживал. Эти действия затронули мои религиозные чувства до глубины души, была душевная боль, так как были растоптаны те сокровенные вещи, которые для меня являются святыми по жизни. Эти действия носили явное презрение к православным традициям и православным верующим, здесь все было открыто и понятно, явная вражда, неприязнь, особенно мне запомнились движения рук кулаками вперед. В последующем я видел видеоролик в интернете, не помню когда, но конечно я его даже не досмотрел, настолько это все грязно, ролик не соответствовал происходящему в храме, (...) Это меня оскорбило и унизило. Смысл слов песни оскорбляет чувства верующих, так как в ней используются святые слова, например Богородица, в кошунственном контексте. Я услышал похожее на церковное пение, это была пародия на церковную службу, но это не сопоставимо с пением богослужения. Эти действия в храме вызывают ненависть и вражду к православным верующим в храме, не один мой знакомый не одобрил, кто-то возмутился.

a sense of self-satisfaction from their own outrage at the perceived blasphemous insult to their faith.

The victims' narratives dealing with blasphemy are supposed to be factual statements acknowledging the presupposed crime of blasphemy rather than testimonies used in the juridical process of opinion making. Accordingly, the verbal representations of hurt feelings target the performative positing of self-evident emotions not open for debate. This strategy becomes particularly evident when the accused or the lawyers for the defense ask for more detailed descriptions of the nature of the offense or its effects on the offended. In many cases the judge dismisses such questions, as well as others regarding the victim's idea of faith, and questions related to their political and philosophical views. Sometimes, the questions are permitted and answered, but never do they contribute to a more detailed assessment of hurt feelings than that given in the initial assertion. One short example out of many is the cross-examination of Lyubov' Sokologorskaya:

**Advocate Polozov:** Did you see a doctor or psychologist in respect to your psychological trauma?

**Offended:** I felt the blessed energy of the Holy Spirit, and this is stronger;

**Polozov:** Why didn't she heal you completely?

**Chairman:** Question dismissed;

**Polozov:** Why exactly was this parody of the sign of the cross?

**Chairman:** Question dismissed;

**Polozov:** What is your attitude towards feminism?

**Chairman:** Question dismissed (Khamovicheskij rajonnyj sud 2012:81)<sup>19</sup>.

In addition, the cross-examination of Sergei Beloglazov includes the following dialogue:

**Advocate Polozov:** Which emotions did you have when you saw what was going on in the church?

**Offended:** It upset me very much;

**Polozov:** You said that you could not enter the church for two months; could you describe your internal feelings and sufferings that were caused by these actions?

**Chairman:** Question dismissed;

**Polozov:** The fact, that the behavior of the defendants insulted you—those five months they have now already spent in jail: is this equal to your frustration?

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19 Защитник адвокат Полозов: Вы обращались к врачам или психологам в связи с психологической травмой? – Потерпевшая: Я чувствовала благодатную энергию святого духа и это сильнее. – Защитник адвокат Полозов: Почему она вас не исцелила до конца? – Председательствующий: Вопрос снят. – Защитник адвокат Полозов: В чем было пародирование крестного знамения? Председательствующий: Вопрос снят – Защитник адвокат Полозов: Как в относитеь к феминизму? – Председательствующий: Вопрос снят.

**Chairman:** Question dismissed;

**Polozov:** Did you see a doctor or psychologist in respect to your sufferings?

**Offended:** I see a priest (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:108)<sup>20</sup>.

As mentioned before, offense and hatred or enmity are closely connected in the case law on blasphemy. Article 282 addresses “actions directed at the incitement of hatred or enmity”. In this trial, the application of this law is quite peculiar. A subject that is obviously full of hate or that instigates enmity among people evokes negative associations and presents a rather ambiguous role model. Such an image is incompatible with that of a liberal citizen, as it reminds us more of a fundamentalist zealot. In order to avoid any such impression, during the trial prosecutors do not emphasize the aspect of incitement, but concentrate much more on the figure of the hurt believer. Among the scenarios in which the believer’s hatred is thematized is this one made by Lyubov’ Sokolovskaya, as it marks the fine line between morally unimpeachable offense, that is ‘felt’, and a form of ethically more compromising hatred, that is only ‘presumed’:

I think that it was one of their goals to instigate the believers’ rage. The actions of the defendants insulted me; they caused me huge moral pain. This pain will last. This has stirred resonance amongst believers. It was the second week of preparation for the Great Feast, and here we have an attempt to blow up everything, to instigate rage and anger (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:78)<sup>21</sup>.

Instead of ascribing hatred to the believers, it is ascribed to the defendants. During the cross-examination of Vasily Tsyganyuk, Prosecutor Nikiforov asks him:

Do the actions of the defendants show feelings of hatred and enmity towards Orthodox citizens?” (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:91)<sup>22</sup>.

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20 Защитник адвокат Полозов: Какое чувство вы испытали, когда увидели то, что происходило в храме? – Потерпевший: Расстроило меня очень сильно. – Защитник адвокат Полозов: Вы сказали, что два месяца в храм войти не могли, вы можете описать свои переживания, страдания, которые были вызваны тем действием, что с вами происходило? Председательствующий: Вопрос снят – Защитник адвокат Полозов: То, что вас расстроило поведение наших подзащитных, те 5 месяцев, которые они находятся в заключении, равноценно вашему расстройству? Председательствующий: Снят вопрос – Вы обращались к врачу, психологу, в связи с вашими страданиями? – Потерпевший: Я хожу к священнику.

21 Вызвать злость у верующих, думаю, было одной из них целей. Действия подсудимых для меня оскорбительны, их действия мне причинили огромный моральный вред, это боль непроходящая. Это вызывало резонанс среди верующих, это была вторая неделя подготовки к Великому посту, а здесь стремление взорвать все и вся, вызвать гнев, раздражение.

22 Данные действия в храме и ролик показывают чувства ненависти и вражды к православным верующим?

This is a very short, but revealing question, as it documents the displacement of hatred from the believers to the members of Pussy Riot by using almost the exact words of Article 282 with just some slight changes in reference. This ascribing becomes established during the course of the trial, where it is constantly emphasized that the group members' actions were motivated by religious hatred and enmity. Finally, the verdict is full of repetitions of statements declaring that the facts of the case have been proven:

The aforementioned actions were obviously targeted at the instigation of religious hatred and enmity, as well as the abasement of dignity of a person or a group of persons on the basis of attitude to religion<sup>23</sup>.

When verbalizing their offence and their hatred, the overwhelming majority of the victims basically invoke the words of the law. By doing so, they are being represented or represent themselves as perfectly compliant citizens, allegiant to both the ROC and the Russian state, which defines the relevant jurisdiction in this trial. As a result, because of the prosecutor and judge's policies, those subjects seem rather one-dimensional. Most of them espouse narrow definitions and are obviously reliant on some form of diffuse common sense defined by religious and political authorities. The council for the defense systematically attempts to reveal these traits in order to undermine the victim's positive image and to discredit them. In this respect, the aforementioned cross-examination strategy is not only a means to try to establish that the members of Pussy Riot are no 'possessed women', but also to slightly question the victims' rationality. Or, to put it in other words, to confront the religious truth on rationality with a secular, evidence-based one. Beyond that, the defense also tries to reveal the bigotry of the image of a 'good Orthodox believer' by demonstrating to the judge and audience the believers' incapacity or unwillingness to forgive. Before and during the trial, Maria Alyokhina repeatedly gave her excuses to believers, as did the other members in various statements. Some believers accepted them, but most did not. Also during cross-examination, the defendants and their advocates emphasized that such lack of forgiveness was contrary to Christian virtues:

**Advocate Polozov:** Is forgiveness a Christian virtue?

**Offended:** Every faithful person should strive to be able to forgive;

**Polozov:** Can you forgive?

**Offended:** I'm not perfect (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:102)<sup>24</sup>.

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23 Упомянутые действия были явно направлены на возбуждение религиозной ненависти и вражды, а также на унижение достоинства человека по признакам принадлежности к религии.

24 Защитник адвокат Полозов: Прощение – одна из христианских ценностей? – Потерпевший: Любой верующий человек, должен стараться уметь прощать. – Защитник

The offended believers' most obvious quality is their resemblance to other hurt believers. This is another quite important effect of the seriality of the numerous victims' statements. They represent themselves not as individuals (allegedly not even their petitions or opinions were authentically personal), but rather the abstract, ideal collective of Orthodox believers. This becomes apparent even in the statements made during cross-examination, where victims repeatedly refer not only to their own hurt feelings, but also to those of others: In the verdict, this rhetoric of the collective becomes emphasized even more. Pussy Riot were alleged to have hurt not only those present in the cathedral at the time the incident happened, but the Church collective. That is why the publication of the performance made partially with material filmed in the cathedral is considered an important part of the offence. Most of the offended are being questioned about the effect the video had on them, and all of them claimed that seeing the performance was as disturbing as witnessing the action in the cathedral. One witness was not even present in the cathedral at all but only saw the video clip. His more elaborate assessment of the events demonstrates perfectly how the incident is interpreted as an attack on the ROC and, on the other hand, as the formation of a dangerous "army of enemies" willing to break down the foundations of the Russian society, deeply rooted in Orthodoxy<sup>25</sup>.

The relationship of individuality and collectivity is significant not only with respect to the hurt believers, but also with respect to the Pussy Riot members. The victims' statements can be regarded—and are designed—as a generic speech act of people symbolizing a collective, namely the collective of Orthodox believers, or, in broader terms, the collective of righteous Russian citizens, who are naturally of Orthodox faith. Therefore, they are not meant to express individuality, but exemplarity.

The image and speech of the members of Pussy Riot on the other hand are designed to express a different notion of collectivity. In his short comment on the trial against Pussy Riot, Slavoj Žižek has considered the Pussy Riot members to be global symbols of a simple but far-reaching message: "Their message is: IDEAS MATTER. They are conceptual artists in the noblest sense of the word: artists who embody an Idea. This is why they wear balaclavas: masks of de-individualization, of liberating anonymity. The message of their balaclavas is that it doesn't matter which of them got arrested—they're not individuals, they're an Idea. And this is why they are such a threat: it is easy to imprison individuals, but try to imprison an Idea!" (Žižek 2012)<sup>26</sup>.

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адвокат Волкова: Вы умеете прощать? –Потерпевший: Я не идеальный.

25 For the prosecutors, it is important to demonstrate the impression that the video has made, because the use of mass media is an important penalty, mentioned in the law.

26 Maria Chehonadskih, who has taken up this thought and asked, what exactly Pussy Riot's idea

Interestingly, in her commentary, Chehonadskih considers modes of speech as a central paradigm for the assessment of actionism. She claims that under the political and social circumstances of early 21<sup>st</sup> century Russia, to practice hysterical and obscene speech in artistic actionism was the most efficient way to distort the surface of a fake ‘stability’ established by the regime. Without doubt, the Pussy Riot performances fall into the category of this kind of actionism. Nevertheless, interestingly enough, during the court trial, particularly in their opening and closing statements, the Pussy Riot members attempted to convert this hysterical speech into a voice of reason of enlightened citizens, pulling out all the stops of pathetic rhetoric. This becomes apparent during the trial, when the defendants repeatedly interject during cross-examination to scrutinize the stereotypical questions and answers, in an attempt to obtain more differentiated, authentic comments on the nature of the emotions that are predicated and ascribed during the trial. Therefore, they ask how the victims can tell that the defendants acted out of religious hatred (“Почему из нарушения правил вы выводите, что у нас наличествует религиозная ненависть и вражда?”<sup>27</sup> (Khamovicheskii raionniy sud 2012:83); about their understanding of blasphemy; and the exact ways in which their feelings had been hurt. They also try to contest implicit allegations that they are some sort of possessed demons or witches that could be concluded from the witness accounts describing them as carrying out wild and diabolical dances at the ambo. The group’s lawyers assist them in establishing their sanity and questioning the victim’s alleged expertise on insanity:

**Advocate Polozov:** Have you met possessed persons?

**Offended:** Yes;

**Polozov:** How did they behave?

**Offended:** In different ways, some screamed, some hit their heads, some fell. I’ve never seen them dancing;

**Polozov:** Do you think that the possessed can dance?

**Offended:** Usually they don’t;

**Polozov:** And can they run to the altar?

**Offended:** They can try;

**Polozov:** Are those women possessed?

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was, rightly disagrees with Žižek, claiming that the de-individualizing effect had passed the moment the masks were taken off. The trial marks the beginning of a new phase in the history of the group’s activity, when Pussy Riot rapidly became a global brand promoted by young political technologists, primarily via social media technologies like Facebook. In this campaign, establishing Pussy Riot as a voice of the universal category of the discontented, an ‘extreme individualism’ becomes apparent (Chehonadskih 2012:4). But still, in court, they stand for the idea of a collective identity opposed to that prompted by church and state.

27 Why from our infringement of rules do you draw the conclusion that we feel religious hatred and enmity?

**Chairman:** Question dismissed (Khamovicheskiy raionniy sud 2012:94)<sup>28</sup>.

The members of Pussy Riot emphatically claim to have acted out of political reasons and as civil rights activists and feminists. In an effort to expose the hidden political motivations of the trial, such as the suppression of feminist activities or liberal thought, they ask about the victims' political attitudes and, in particular, their attitude towards feminism, but typically those and most other insistent questions are dismissed by the judge.

However, the most significant texts with regard to the establishment of an image of enlightened, non-conformist state subjects are the speeches given by the Pussy Riot members themselves, particularly the closing statements, which gained quite huge popularity. Interestingly, in those statements, the motif of speech plays a central role. In her statement, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova refers to herself and her fellow group members as being deprived of their voices, which she claims to be voices of reason:

The medieval Inquisition methods that reign in the law enforcement and judicial systems of our country, the Russian Federation, are enough to make you weep. But from the moment of our arrest, we have stopped weeping. We have lost our ability to cry. We had desperately shouted at our punk concerts. With all our might, we decried the lawlessness of the authorities, the governing bodies. But now, our voices have been taken away. During the entire trial, people have refused to hear us. Hearing us would mean being receptive to what we say, being thoughtful, striving toward wisdom, being philosophers (Bozovic, Hanukai, Senderovich 2012)<sup>29, 30</sup>.

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28 Защитник адвокат Полозов: Вы встречали бесноватых? – Потерпевший: Да – Защитник адвокат Полозов: Как они себя вели? – Потерпевший: По-разному, кто-то орет, бьется головой, кто-то падает. Танцующих не бывало. – Защитник адвокат Полозов: Бесноватые могут танцевать? – Потерпевший: Обычно не танцуют. – Защитник адвокат Полозов: А в алтарь могут пробегать? – Потерпевший: Могут попытаться. – Защитник адвокат Полозов: Эти женщины бесноватые? - Председательствующий: Вопрос снят.

29 Хочется рыдать, глядя на то, как приемы средневековой инквизиции воцаряются в правоохранительной и судебной системах Российской Федерации, которая – наша страна. Но с момента ареста мы не можем больше рыдать, мы разучились плакать. Мы отчаянно кричали на наших панк-концертах, как могли и как умели, о беззакониях начальства и властей. Но вот у нас украли голос. Весь процесс нас отказываются слышать. Именно слышать. Слышать – это значит воспринимать, думать при этом, стремиться к мудрости, быть философами (Pussy Riot:2012a). Cited by the video recording of the statement, as the transcript of court proceedings differs slightly from this apparent original.

30 This argument appears in the other statements as well, with both Tolokonnikova and Yekaterina Samutsevich pleading for a culture of dialogue, and starting this dialogue by referring to all kinds of historical authorities.

Significantly, Tolokonnikova in her statement connects the motif of speechlessness with the motif of absent tears; of persecuted women. This is crucial, as it reveals a strategy of emotional charges pursued by Pussy Riot during the trial, which is intended to be more powerful and impressive than the discourse on feelings led by the law. This includes a deliberated reference to female gender stereotypes such as weakness, emotionality, etc. In addition, the group and their supporters put quite huge efforts into shaping a picture of beautiful, attractive women, two of whom are also mothers who are being brutally taken away from their children. The worldwide reception of the trial has shown how this staging of a conflict between weak but brave beauties and ‘the beast’ has developed. However, in their speeches, they aim to overcome this cliché and present themselves as enlightened feminists who act rationally and are very well aware of their place in the history of Russian political and cultural dissent. Therefore, they intend to create an ideal of a citizen, thereby fighting against the collectivism and anti-individualism they perceive to still be predominant in Russian society. Particularly Maria Alyokhina’s closing statement is built around this argument:

And right here, in this closing statement, I would like to describe my firsthand experience of running afoul of this system. Our schooling, which is where the personality begins to form in a social context, effectively ignores any particularities of the individual. There is no “individual approach,” no study of culture, of philosophy, of basic knowledge about civic society. Officially, these subjects do exist, but they are still taught according to the Soviet model. And as a result, we see the marginalization of contemporary art in the public consciousness, a lack of motivation for philosophical thought, and gender stereotyping. The concept of the human being as a citizen gets swept away into a distant corner. (...) These people...this is yet another confirmation that people in our country have lost the sense that this country belongs to us, its citizens. They no longer have a sense of themselves as citizens. They have a sense of themselves simply as the automated masses. They don’t feel that the forest belongs to them, even though the forest located right next to their houses. I doubt they even feel a sense of ownership over their own houses (Corrigan, Glazov-Corrigan 2012)<sup>31</sup>.

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31 И в этом последнем слове хочу вкратце описать мой непосредственный опыт столкновения с этой системой. Образование, из которого начинается становление личности в социуме, фактически игнорирует особенности этой личности. Отсутствует индивидуальный подход, отсутствует изучение культуры, философии, базовых знаний о гражданском обществе. Формально эти предметы есть. Но формы их преподавания наследует советский образец. И как итог, мы имеем маргинализацию современного искусства в сознании человека, отсутствие мотивации к философскому мышлению, гендерную стереотипизацию и отметание в дальний угол позицию человека как гражданина. (...) люди у нас в стране перестали ощущать принадлежность территорий нашей страны

Samutsevich, at the end of her statement, claims to have “mixed feelings” about the outcomes of the trial, which showed their defenselessness in the face of the institutions and yet raised awareness of political grievances in Russia. This expression can be considered a deliberate rhetorical displacement. In fact, Samutsevich’s “mixed feelings” stand for the group’s subversive “micropolitics of emotion” during this trial, in which they engaged in order to confront the politics of distinct, prescribed emotions evolving around blasphemy with the ambiguity and diversity of emotions connected to them as the symbol of resistance that they knew they were about to become. However, we must not forget that the ‘hurt believer’ has become a strong symbol as well, and quite a dubious one.

To sum up, it can be stated, that for the authorities, the Pussy Riot trial was a means to establish an emotional regime based on the concurrence of insult and hatred. This was ensured by the use of two opposing images: a positive collective portrait of honest, upright, and morally superior Orthodox believers— ideal Russian citizens on the one hand, versus a negative image of dangerous, pro-Western, feminist, anti-Orthodox individuals on the other. It focuses on the positive image of the Orthodox believer, who shall be insulted when his church and its sanctuaries are attacked and shall hate the offender. However, in order to ensure an unabated positive image of the hurt believer, his hatred gets moderated in the legal discourse and rather ascribed to the offender, who appears as the one threatening the community with his hatred. This strategy serves very effectively to establish a clear image of a citizen as a highly emotionally charged, but thereby vulnerable subject in need of protection. This protection, of course, is guaranteed by the strong alliance of church and state, which became apparent in this incident. Nevertheless, the effort to ensure a vivid image of hurt believers, as it was conducted by the prosecution, has quite contradictory effects. There is a very strong emphasis on the antagonism of good and evil and the fabrication of an idea of faith. This appears quite simple or naïve, because it is expressed mostly through insult; as a result, the Orthodox believer as a loyal citizen appears to be quite stereotyped. The Pussy Riot members and the defense, for their part, try to expose exactly this simplifying image, calling for a different notion of “the people” (народ) (Гапова 2012). Thereby, their performance in the courtroom is to be considered part of the performance for which they were

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им самим, гражданам. Эти люди перестали чувствовать себя гражданами. Они себя чувствуют просто автоматическими массами. Они не чувствуют, что им принадлежит даже лес, находящийся непосредственно у них около дома. Я даже сомневаюсь в том, что они осознают принадлежность собственного дома им самим. (Pussy Riot 2012). Cited from the video recording of the statement, as the transcript of the court proceedings differs slightly from this apparent original.

eventually sentenced. Subsequent to the Pussy Riot trial, it is evident that the politics of emotion—which was so openly employed in that case—has continued as a means to both shape public attitudes and to define the role of Orthodoxy in the new Russia.

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