

The Art of Survival

It all boils down to survival. That is the conclusion the author Tony Schwartz draws while watching the power struggles in the Washington swamp. Asked by an MSNBC anchor Ari Melber what the final meaning of Trump's struggles might be both for his fans and critics alike, Schwartz - Trump's old buddy from the eighties and a co-author of a bestseller "The Art of the Deal" replies as follows: He (Trump) is remarkable in keeping his image of an effective businessman alive. In the years 1986-87 I was working on the book, and exactly then he had huge problems; he was losing tens, maybe hundreds of millions, and if you had sat with him at the coffee table you had no clue what was going on. Just the same mantra: "I am doing better than ever" Did you believe at that time he was a billionaire? - asks Melber. - I did not believe it at any moment. The fact is that Trump has been doing all he can to deflect the public attention from the reality, as it really is. Unfortunately, "Forbes" magazine found him a billionaire. In Schwartz's view each story covering Trump should have begun with an attempt to answer the question how he (both developer and politician) managed to debase our collective humanity. Upon some reflection, one has to admit that there is a small grain of genius involved in it. Trump has always been able to stoke fear, anger and frustration, both in his fans and opponents alike. He had a knack to drag the latter to his level where neither the good nor the evil exists. This level means the bare-knuckle fight for survival. In the context of Washington tug-of-war visible to everyone, the MSNBC journalist did not feel like asking Tony Schwartz whether his ex-buddy Trump had written "The Art of the Deal" himself or maybe the co-author himself also played a role of ghostwriter. Anyway, virtually no-one cares for such trifles these days.

Will such a time come when someone will appear to dry out the Washington swamp? It makes no difference if his name will be Robin Hood, Spiderman, Superman, Rocky Balboa and - after all - why not Donald Trump? The essential thing is to do it once for all. Such a character - should it materialize - will belong to the world of the mass imagination of the American labor, saturated with TV serials and action movies. More Hollywood in him than real politics. He will be ruthless to media and oil tycoons, corrupted policemen, gangsters and con-men of all stripes. But he will show compassion to the lowly, to successors of those addressed by the poet Emma Lazarus in her memorable quotation displayed for the last 136 years on the Statue of Liberty standing guard where the Hudson flows into the ocean: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe freedom". After a few generations it turns out that the politicians' promises do not match the aspirations of the contemporary masses. Numerous young people intending to make career complain either about New York elites or "the Washington swamp" - not unlike the Trump's team did three years ago. The president's dream-wish, that is the Mexico border wall is not there yet. Within a dozen of months, the Donald Trump myth will materialize in tangible way or it will crumble into thousand pieces like a mirror in one of Andersen's gloomy fables. It is quite probable that a legacy left by the White House tenant to his disappointed countrymen will be the firm belief that what counts is only the art of survival.

A decade ago each part of a popular TV sequel "The Apprentice" would end with Donald Trump's himself playing a role of a corporation boss telling his team: "You're fired!" Now, after two years of seeing a breath-taking revolving door speed of the White House personnel changes, one might say that the next sequel part is on. The viewers are to admire its main hero. Sure - that is he - both shrewd and caring, though at times tough-talking if need be. He is the talented one, though surrounded with mediocrities. That is how president Trump would love to see himself. Sure enough - the head of state does not suffer from low self-esteem. Yet the time is merciless, and a moment of reckoning will come, in which "The Apprentice" s main star will realize that common life differs a lot from Hollywood.

We do not know who will utter the magic words "You're fired" in real life. What we do know that it will not be Donald Trump.

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