

Conservatism in the Post-Soviet Context: Ideology, Worldview, or Moral Choice?

International conference

Uppsala Centre for Russian and Eurasian Studies

Gamla Torget 3, 3rd floor, UCRS Library

8-9 May 2017



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Russian intellectual history has long been associated with right- and left-wing extremities, but in the last years Russia has become a showcase of a relatively moderate conservative and right-wing populist ideas. It might be a stretch to identify an originally Russian conservative ideology, but one can certainly speak of the ubiquity of the conservative political culture in present-day Russia. The conservative turn became especially visible during Vladimir Putin's third presidential period, when the Russian leadership and intellectual elite explicitly point at conservatism as their ideological source of inspiration, and eagerly draw on 'Political Orthodoxy', discourses about traditional values, and unique Russian civilization. This conservative turn has not happened overnight but had been prepared by decades of the ideological work of the right-wing and pro-government think tanks and groups of intellectuals. Besides, there has always been an indigenous conservative tradition in Russia, which is being unearthed and recycled in our days. Russian conservatism does not exist in an intellectual vacuum; by contrast, there has always been a transit of conservative ideas from the West, or rather a dialogue between Russian and Western conservative intellectuals. Today, this dialogue boomerangs in a way, that has made Russia a major exporter of conservative concepts and visions across the globe.

Grounding on the empirical research in Russian intellectual history, the conference aims to refining our understanding of the ideology of conservatism by situating it within three planes of interpretation: history of ideas, popular visions, and moral-political reasoning. The conference will specifically discuss how conservatism as an ideology mediates the dilemma between modernization and authenticity; how the Russian Orthodox Church is contributing to the conservative ideology; how today's conservative intellectuals make sense of the conservative tradition, formulate the conservative ideological canon, refer to Russian and Western conservative classics. By so doing, the conference will approach a theoretical examination of how conceptual constructs of Russian conservatives challenge the theoretical framing of an ideology.

PROGRAMME

Monday, May 8

10.00-10.30 Welcome speeches

10.30 – 12.00 **Panel 1: Russian conservatism in historical context**

Mikhail Luk'ianov, 'Russia and the West in Conservative Political Discourses'

Mikhail Suslov, 'Slavophile Tradition in Russian Conservatism'

12.00 – 13.00 Lunch break

13.00-14.30 Panel 2: Russian conservatism in the international context

Thomas Bremer, 'The Russian Orthodox Church and its Conservative Partners in the West'

Mark Bassin, 'Lev Gumilev and the European New Right'

14.30-14.45 Coffee break

14.45-16.00 **Panel 3: Conservatism and the Russian Orthodox Church**

Andrei Shishkov, 'Neo-Palamism as construction of Orthodox theological tradition and conservative ideology'

Victor Shnirelman, Russian Neo-conservatism and Apocalyptic imperialism.

16.00 – 16.15 Coffee break

16.15-18.00 **Roundtable 1: Conservatism as an ideology: Russian context and beyond**

Tuesday, 9 May

10.00-11.30 **Panel 4: Conservative reading of the history of Russia**

Kåre Johan Mjör, "Russia's Thousand-Year-Old History": A Standard Phrase in Post-Soviet Russian Conservative Thought and its Meaning(s)

Per-Arne Bodin, The revival of grand prince Vladimir

11.30 – 12.30 Lunch break

12.30 – 14.30 **Panel 6: Conservatives on “traditional values”**

Dmitrii Uzlaner, Logic of “scapegoating” in the discourse of traditional values: Debates on juvenile justice in Russia

Iliia Kalinin, Genetically Modified Conservatism: On "Russian Cultural Code"

Alicja Curanovic, Conservatism and Russian contemporary exceptionalism

14.30-14.45 Coffee break

14.45 – 16.30 **Roundtable 2: Moral conservatism and the role of the Russian Orthodox Church**

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