

The Post-Soviet Contrasts: Memory, Ideology, Conflict

Editorial introduction

Hegel's idea that “Reason is the Sovereign of the World; [... and] the history of the world therefore, presents us with a rational process” has been denied many times by philosophers and politicians in the 19th-21st centuries — and the post-Soviet political reality takes an active part in this denial.

The third issue of *Ideology and Politics Journal* is devoted to the ideological processes that design the post-Soviet practices of escape from freedom. This specific design takes place through political and ideological conflicts; participation and victory in these conflicts lead to the attempts to reassess the importance of freedom. The conflicts of collective memories have been the source of hope in maintaining political pluralism and overcoming the limitations of the “historical track” of post-Soviet nations. Today we are witnessing how the conflicts of narratives reveal their winners, both in internal and external political battles. This *IPJ* issue is dedicated to the fighters, winners and losers in these conflicts.

This *IPJ* volume starts with an article by Andrei Tsygankov, presenting an analysis of Alexander Panarin's ideological development. A passionate, Soviet liberal and a bright, post-Soviet Eurasianist, Panarin lived through an ideological evolution that is indicative of the restless generation of 1960s. Beginning his life in an industrial environment of Donbass and completing it in Moscow's intellectual circles, Alexander Panarin changed his role of defender of liberal ideas to guardian of Russian political traditions. According to Tsygankov, Panarin gives us lessons in the dangers of freedom for Russia. His visions of the need to frame political freedom with social responsibility, free market with “the serving ascetism,” and the Modern Reason with Eco-socialism, make Alexander Panarin a mirror of the Russian conservative revolution at the end of 20th century and the beginning of 21st century.

The author of the second article, Yevgenia Sarapina, writes about competition between alternative versions of collective memory in Kiev. The urban space as such is the setting for the constant (re)production of its past; and, in the case of Kiev, the results of these productive processes and the effects of these results' symbolic exchange make an impact far beyond the administrative limits of the city. Sarapina describes three competitive strategies of the Kiev narratives: sacred-imperial, super-ethnic Soviet, and fragmented post-Soviet. Heterogeneity and the inability to settle the conflict of memories makes Kiev a symbol of the post-Soviet struggle for ideological dominance.

In the next article, Leonid Storch compares public reactions to the Pussy Riot case with debates around the Beilis case a century ago. The analytical perspective proposed by the author is frighteningly impressive. In contrast to the victory of right over ideology in the Beilis case, the criminal sentence for the “priestesses of the punk-mass” seems to embody the historical revenge of anti-Westernism. It also adds to a suspicion that the last century represents a turn away from the Hegelian spiral unfolding the freedom in the history of Eastern Europe/Western Eurasia. The recent criminalization of blasphemy manifests the success of pre-Modernity — not post-Modernity as many expected — in the post-Soviet political transformation.

The final article in this *IPJ* volume indoctrinates us into conceptual debates in post-Soviet, symbolic geography. The polemical text by Vladimir Papava describes a variety of conservative ways to re-determine the space formed after the Soviet Union's disappearance. As an argument against Russian Eurasianists' geopolitical ideas, Vladimir Papava introduces the concept of Central CaucAsia. As a side effect of these polemics, this article provides us with a chance to better understand geopolitical argument with its ideological grounds and purposes.

Hegel called for "a belief... a desire, a trust" in the fact that there is Reason in the history of the world. The post-Soviet history provides us with a rare constellation of obstacles that test such a trust.

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