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Abstracts

Abdusalam A. Guseinov and Vladislav A. Lektorsky
Philosophy in Russia: History and Present State

This paper sketches an historical outline of philosophy in Russia from the modern era to present time. It describes the main philosophical trends that characterized the 'Silver Age' in pre-revolutionary Russia (Cosmism, religious philosophy and early Marxist philosophy), and draws some lines of continuity both with Marxist and pre-Marxist philosophy. It studies the internal evolution and organization of Soviet official philosophical thought, and describes the main features the philosophical Renaissance that took place in the Soviet Union in the second half of the 20th century. It finally describes the main trends, authors and publication of philosophy in Russia today.

Piama P. Gaidenko
Russian Philosophy in the Context of European Thinking: The Case of Vladimir Solovyov

Russian philosophy of the 19th century was developing in close contact with European philosophy. The strongest influence on Russian thought was exerted by classical German philosophy. One significant example is the teaching of Vladimir Solovyov, an outstanding 19th century thinker. Solovyov owes several principles of his teaching to Friedrich Schelling, from whom he assimilated his cardinal concept of all-embracing being; also to Schelling we can trace Solovyov's conviction that the will constitutes the determining principle of being as well as his conception of the suffering and developing God. Finally, it was largely through Schelling's influence that Solovyov shaped his cosmogonic theory associated with his sophiology, based on the thesis of the falling away from God of His 'Alter Ego', His 'Prototype'. According to Solovyov, 'the Second God', or Sophia-Wisdom, is God-Made-Man, the Absolute coming into being, whose life underlies the substance of historical process.

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Theodor I. Oizerman
Paradoxes in the Communist Theory of Marxism

In their work *The German Ideology*, the founders of Marxism assert that the prerequisite of post-capitalist (defined by them as communist) society is the *universal* development of human abilities and all social relations. But then on the same page, contrary to this statement, it is alleged that the abolition of private property is not only highly topical but it is also an imperative history-making task. In *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels explain that economic crises recurrently shaking capitalist society expose an apparent contradiction between the productive forces and the capitalist relations of production – therefore, these relations must be eliminated for the preservation of society. Nonetheless, the same treatise affirms that the bourgeoisie cannot exist without revolutionizing not only the productive forces but also the relations of production. But in this case it stands to reason to recognize that there is no conflict between productive forces and production relations, and, therefore, there is no crisis of the capitalist system, either. Paradoxes in the communist theory of Marxism stem not merely from erroneous conceptions but reveal the fact that Marxism as an ideology comes into conflict with its scientific social theory. Hence, these paradoxes disclose the relative independence of the social theory of Marxism from its ideological postulates.

Helen Petrovsky
The Anonymous Community

The paper explores the non-institutional potential of the concept of community as it has been formulated in contemporary French philosophy. Special attention is given to historical experience, particularly in a globalizing world. Fantasies of the historical which attest to such experience are treated as constitutive of an anonymous community defined neither by a fixed identity nor by a given substance. Despite its anonymity, community calls for articulation and translation, producing various 'as-if presentations', to remember the Kantian term.

Vyacheslav S. Stepin
New Models of Development and The Problem of Values

This paper presents a series of analysis of social transformations, from the standpoints of civilizations and formations. The idea of multiple models of development of civilization is exposed. The fundamental values underscoring the traditional and technogenic models are presented. The contemporary crises are studied in its link to globalization. It is argued that, in order to overcome these crises, a substantial transformation of the values of the techngenic civilisation is needed. The upraising values in the spheres of religion, politics, law and scientific rationality are seen as a first step towards a new model of development of our civilization.

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Nelli Motroshilova
Barbarity As The Reverse Side Of Civilization

This article analyzes philosophical discussions on the problem of barbarity as the reverse side of civilization in general, and of the modern civilization in particular (as exemplified by the works of K. Offe, L. Klausen, K.-Z. Reberg, M. Miller, H.-G. Soeffner, S.N. Eisenstadt and Z. Bauman. Joining in these discussions, the author makes a critical appraisal of these works and presents (in brief) her own conception of civilization which she has been elaborating for the last 25 years. Particular attention is drawn to the studies of barbarity implanted in the development of the modern civilization and revealed in the various forms of present-day barbarism (ecological, political, militaristic violence, utter dereliction in daily life, etc.), especially evident in 'outbursts' of violence, suppressing and violating legal rules and moral principles (fascism, totalitarianism, international aggression).

Tom Rockmore
Remarks on Russian Philosophy, Soviet Philosophy and Historicism

This paper concerns two themes: my personal experience of Russian philosophy and Russian philosophers on the one hand, and historicism on the other. My account of my limited experience of Russian philosophers and philosophy will be mainly autobiographical. My remarks about historicism will concern a single aspect of the philosophical consequences of the Soviet experience for Russian philosophy. When I come to Russia, I am always surprised by the degree of interest in a historical approach to knowledge, an interest that, so far as I know, is unique to Russian philosophy. This difference in perspective as concerns the historical character of cognitive claims needs to be explained. It needs to be explained why contemporary Russian philosophers and contemporary Russian philosophy are so hospitable to a historical approach to knowledge, an approach which has always been rare, even unusual, elsewhere. My hypothesis, which I examine the paper, is that there is a deep link between contemporary Russian interest in a historical approach to knowledge and Soviet philosophy. In particular, there is a link to Marx, who is a historical thinker, and to pre-Soviet Russian philosophy, as distinguished from Marxism, which is basically a-historical.

Ruben G. Apressyan
The Ethics of Force: Against Aggression and Violence

In opposition to the absolutist ethics of non-violence, the author argues that in response to aggression and violence one has to use every means possible to prevent them. To resist violence is a moral duty of the individual. It would be desirable for violence to be prevented by strength of mind, but if strength of mind is not enough or the aggressor is insensitive to intellectual, spiritual and psychological impacts, one has to employ by accretion all necessary means. Ethics is called upon to set limits to the employment of the means of countering violence.

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Ilya T. Kasavin
The Idea of Interdisciplinary Approach in Contemporary Epistemology

This paper presents some perspectives in contemporary epistemology, relating in particular to the links between contextualism and interdisciplinary approaches. The author considers the role played by different theories of context in the frame of a social epistemology.

Vladimir Kirillovich Shokhin
The Philosophy Of Religion: A New Field For Russian Philosophy

This paper analyzes why philosophy of religion can surprisingly be considered a rather new field in Russian philosophy. While religion has played a major role in modern Russian culture, the philosophy of religion is still searching a precise definition of its object and domain. Initially, Russian philosophies of religion were inspired by Western influential works, whereas philosophy of religion is barely considered as distinct from theology. As such, philosophy of religion presents a double origin: in a wide sense, it coincides with philosophy, while in a more specific sense its origins are to be found in the modern era. From this point of view, Spinoza is seen as a seminal author for this field of work. This conception is analyzed and used to draw some perspective for the development of philosophy of religion in Russia.

Marietta Stepanyants
Rethinking the History Of Philosophy

Basing herself on Indian and Chinese traditions, the author provides arguments in favour of revising the customary understanding of philosophy per se. The non-existence of uniformity in the methods of cognition cannot be taken as evidence for the phenomenon of 'philosophy' missing outside the Western world. In the East, one can witness fidelity to the broad interpretation of 'philosophy', etymologically much nearer to this concept, presuming, along with rationality, the authority of other sources of knowledge. Philosophy came into the world not once but a number of times and in various places. From the outset it bore out, along with common generic traits, its specific 'patrimonial' characteristics; in other words, those revealing its own culture. In its turn, each culture is built up around a certain 'frame' made up of universal conceptual constituents. The history of philosophy would remain incomplete and one-sided (with a 'Western bias') until it ignores the fundamental universals of other cultures. Even the universals and values recognized as common to all mankind are frequently imbued with basically different substance depending on a context of relevant culture. The reappraisal of the history of philosophy should make the teaching system of philosophy multicultural.

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Boris Kapustin
Some Political Meanings of 'Civilization'

Since the early nineties, the term 'civilization' has undergone remarkable transformations and has assumed political and ideological functions it has not been fit for as a linchpin of the more than two-centuries-old academic discourse on 'civilizations'. These transformations materialized in the political-ideological formations known as the 'clash of civilizations' and the 'dialogue among civilizations' which comprise a 'civilizational discourse' in many respects alternative to the academic one. This essay intends, firstly, to uncover the structural and thematic differences between the academic 'civilizational discourse' and its trendy alternative. Secondly, the essay aspires to demonstrate how complementary, at their methodological and ideological bases, the 'clash of civilizations' and the 'dialogue among civilizations' are, despite their highly-publicized antagonism. Thirdly, the article aims to highlight the actual political processes underway in our world which manifest themselves through and make use of the alternative 'civilizational discourse' as part of their *modus operandi*. The essay ties these processes with the global triumph of capitalism at the closure of the 20th century, and with the rise of the projects of authoritarian hegemony.

Evert van der Zweerde
The Place of Russian Philosophy in World Philosophical History: A Perspective

This paper sketches the ambitious outlines of an assessment of the place of Russian philosophy in philosophical history 'at large', i.e. on a global and world-historical scale. At the same time, it indicates, rather modestly, a number of elements and aspects of such a project. A retrospective reflection and reconstruction is not only a recurrent phenomenon in philosophical culture (which, the author assumes, has become global), it also is, by virtue of its being a philosophical reflection, one among many possible perspectives. The central claim of the paper is that the key to an assessment of the world-historical place of Russian philosophy is to be found in the Soviet period, not only because it was, through its isolation policy and its subordination of philosophy to political and ideological goals, a determining factor for a large part of the 20th century, but also, and more importantly, because it has systematically distorted the perception of Russia's philosophical history, *including* of the Soviet episode itself. The very undoing of these distortions, however, risks becoming a distortion because of, on the one hand, a demonization of the Soviet factor and, on the other hand, a disregard for its philosophical and meta-philosophical relevance.

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