

Dimensions and Challenges of Russian Liberalism

International Workshop
October 26th – 28th, 2017 | University of Turin

The history of Russian liberals has been marked by defeats, most recently at the 2016 Duma elections when not a single candidate associated with liberal parties has been elected. The very definition of a Russian liberalism is problematic and has been debated, both historically and analytically. Nevertheless, Russian liberals were and are a significant historical and political movement that deserves attention. Values and practices traditionally associated with modern liberalism such as individual freedom, property rights, or the rule of law often emerged ambiguously in the Russian historical experience through different forms and combinations. Liberal projects were shaped by circumstances, evolved in response to challenges and developed within changing institutional and international settings. Economic and political liberalism often appeared disjointed or in opposition to each other. Even during the late Soviet Union, after the physical destruction of the pre-revolutionary liberal intelligentsia, a discourse of human rights emerged under the surface of the official ideology. As in other political and historical realities Russian liberalism presents a hybrid, multi-faceted character. It is evident that no single Russian, or for that matter Western, “liberalism” exists. To assume -more or less implicitly- that there is a single liberal or “Western” intellectual paradigm limits our understanding of the political and historical dynamic. Therefore, empirical and intellectual contextualization of what liberalism meant at different times is crucial. Understanding of the Russian liberal experience requires a dialog between past and present, historians and political scientists.

The international workshop *Dimensions and Challenges of Russian Liberalism* is organized by Reset DOC in partnership with University of Turin, Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (IERES) of George Washington University and William and Mary College.

International Partners:

Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (IERES), George Washington University; University of Turin; Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University; Cold War Studies Program, Harvard University; London School of Economics; Wendy and Emery Reves Center for International Studies, College of William and Mary; National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow.

Project Director:

Giancarlo Bosetti (Reset-Dialogues on Civilizations)

Scientific Coordinators:

Andrea Graziosi (ANVUR, University of Naples Federico II), Alberto Masoero (University of Genoa)

Scientific Committee:

Gianmaria AJANI (University of Turin), Alexey BARABASHEV (Higher School of Economics, Moscow); Giancarlo BOSETTI (Reset-DoC), Andrea GRAZIOSI (ANVUR, University of Naples Federico II), Stephen E. HANSON (Reves Center), Mark KRAMER (Cold War Studies and Davis Center), Marlene LARUELLE (European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, George Washington University); Andrei MELVILLE (Higher School of Economics, Moscow), Alexandra VACROUX (Davis Center), Vladislav M. ZUBOK (The London School of Economics and Political Science)

Working Language: English

Draft Program

Thursday - October 26th, 2017

3.30 pm – 4.00 pm – Welcome address

4.00 pm – 6.30 pm - Session 1. Pre-revolutionary Liberalism and the Challenges of Modernity

Speakers

Igor Christoforov | Princeton University

Liberal Bureaucrats and the Ability to Reform

Aleksei Kara-Murza | Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

Olga Zhukova | National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow

The Political Philosophy of Russian Liberalism

Ekaterina Pravilova | Princeton University

Liberals and Property Rights

Alexander Semyonov | Higher School of Economics, Saint Petersburg

Dilemmas of Liberalism in the Russian Imperial Context

Moderators/discussants

Peter Holquist | University of Pennsylvania; Alberto Masoero | University of Genoa

Friday - October 27th, 2017

9.00 am – 11.00 am - Session 2. Liberal Undercurrents in Soviet Times

Speakers

Benjamin Nathans | University of Pennsylvania

Human Rights Defenders within Soviet Politics

Vladislav Zubok | LSE

Intelligentsia as a liberal concept, 1950s – 1980s

Svetlana Savranskaia | National Security Archives

Gorbachev's New Political Thinking: A Substitute for Liberalism

Viktor Sheinis | Institute of World Economy and International Relations

Paradoxes and consequences of liberal reforms in Russia

Moderators/discussants: Andrea Graziosi | ANVUR, University of Naples; Steve Hanson | College of William & Mary;

11.00 - 11.10 am - Coffee break

11.10 am – 1.30 pm Session 3. The 1990s: “Time of Troubles”

Speakers

Sergey Shakhrai | Russian Historical Society

The Legacies of the Gorbachev-era Liberalism and its Limitations

Gennadii E. Burbulis | International University in Moscow

Constitutional Liberalism, Federalism, and Regionalism

Rudol'f G. Pikhov | Institute of History, Russian Academy of Science

The Impact of October 1993 on Liberal Thinkers and Civil Society

Alexander V. Obolonsky | Higher School of Economics

Liberal Values, Ethics, and the Soviet Administrative Heritage

Guillaume Sauvé | EURUS - Carleton University

Drawing Lessons from Collapse: Russian Liberals on the Failure of Perestroika

Moderators/discussants: Alexey Barabashev | Higher School of Economics; Mark Kramer | Davis Center, Harvard University

Lunch – 1.30 – 2.30 pm

2.30 pm - 5.00 pm - Panel 4. Liberalism under Pressure: 2000-2010s

Speakers

Evgeny Yassin | Liberal Mission – Higher School of Economics

Liberalism or Dirigisme in Russian Economics?

Igor Klyamkin | Liberal Mission

Why the Liberal Alternative did not Sustain in Russia?

Sergey Medvedev | Higher School of Economics

How Liberalism Survives in Russian Culture

Kirill Rogov | Liberal Mission

Public Attitudes after the Presidential Elections in Russia, 2018

Valeryi Solovey | MGIMO

Liberals or Technocrats? Liberal Ideas and Values in the Mindset of the Russian Elite

Moderators / discussants: Marlene Laruelle (George Washington University), Andrey Melville (Higher School of Economics)

Saturday - October 28th, 2017

10.00 am - Concluding Round Table. Russian Liberals and the World Order

Gianmaria Ajani | Dean, University of Turin

Giuliano Amato | Judge of the Italian Constitutional Court and Former Prime Minister of Italy

Andrea Graziosi | ANVUR, University of Naples Federico II

Nina Khrushcheva | Graduate Program in International Affairs, The New School

Marlene Laruelle | George Washington University

Andrey Melville | Higher School of Economics

Chair: Roberto Toscano | Former Italian Ambassador in Teheran and New Delhi