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Introduction: Radical Philosophies in Russia

MARLENE LARUELLE

One year after Russia's military invasion of Ukraine, the Kremlin-backed language of war has continued to expand through new indoctrination mechanisms, as well as regular attempts by Russia's spin doctors to craft new ideational products. This collection of articles explores Russia's radical philosophies as a key fundament for the state production of extreme narratives with strong religious overtones.

Scholarship on Russia has tended to analyze the rise in power of social conservatism in Russia as an instrumental strategy by the regime to remain in power and secure consensus at home. Yet the justification for the war against Ukraine has showed that many of the ideological assumptions implied in Russian social conservative language were not opportunistic. They are deeply-seated worldviews shared within the decisionmaking circles surrounding Vladimir Putin, strong enough to influence the country's entry into war. Dmitri Uzlaner delves into the two faces of Russian social conservatism to explore its phantasmatic side, identifying several key and interrelated phantasms around the notions of lost harmony, theft of enjoyment, scapegoating, and sinking into chaos.

While Alexander Dugin has been misrepresented in Western media as Putin's gray cardinal, the Russian ideologue has contributed to an elaborate array of new doctrines, largely inspired by Western fascist or parafascist tradition and adapted for Russian consumption by a Russification of their cultural references. An understudied aspect of this has been Dugin's intellectual debt to Romanian fascist tradition and especially the *Legionary Phenomenon* (1938) by Romanian Legionary ideologue Nae Ionescu, itself inspired by Julius Evola's *Revolt against the Modern World* (1934). Jason Roberts investigates how the doctrinal construction of the *Legionary Phenomenon* heavily influenced Dugin's own writings on integral traditionalism and the so-called Fourth Political Theory. What the Russian ideologue takes from Evola and Ionescu is the link between metaphysical assumptions (that is, the epistemological paradigm) and ultranationalist conclusions, so what matters is not so much what is held to be true but *how* truth itself is demonstrated.

The role of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) in feeding the Russian state with religion-based arguments has been increasing with the war, that saw the Russian president presenting LGBTQ+ rights as a civilizational divide between the West and Russia—something the Church has been advancing for long. Yet the Moscow

Marlene Laruelle

Patriarchate keeps open many discursive lines to be sure to stay in synch with the state and some segments of the population. One of its ideological offspring is found in Sorok Sorokov, a youth paramilitary Orthodox movement. Adam Hanzel and Kiril Avramov investigate the Sorok Sorokov movement as the ideological pretorian guard of the Church, acting as a radicalizing outreach arm of the Patriarchate. To demonstrate this relationship, the authors developed Telegram API and web scraping tools and also utilized exploratory data analysis, natural language processing, and critical discourse analysis to establish that Sorok Sorokov operates as a radical extension of Patriarch Kirill's interpretation of "holy tradition" and address themes that the ROC cannot directly speak of.