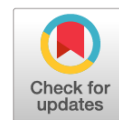


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# Urgency of Addressing the Problem of State Ideology: Divergent Perspectives from Scholars and Politicians

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## ABSTRACT

Throughout its centuries-long history, Russia has repeatedly attempted to define its historical purpose, determine the course and strategy of sociopolitical development, and articulate the value preferences guiding its society. It is evident that addressing such a complex undertaking, burdened with profound objectives, necessitates an appropriate framework of ideas, perspectives, and theories. This article substantiates the possibility, necessity, and practical significance of a state ideology, while also questioning the relevance, in contemporary historical conditions, of maintaining the constitutional prohibition on a state or mandatory ideology. Russia possesses an ideology of statehood, with its main substantive components enshrined in the country's Constitution, relevant legal statutes, annual presidential addresses to the Federal Assembly, and relevant programs, doctrines, and other political documents. Central to this ideological framework is the concept of a federal democratic legal social secular state harmoniously integrated with the traditional ideals, values, and priorities of Russian civilization. This study adopts a comparative institutional and functional approach.

**Keywords:** state; state ideology; power; ideal; ideology; state interest; national interest; conservatism; liberalism; nationalism; patriotism; values; civilization.

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# Проблема государственной идеологии становится все более актуальной: мнения ученых и политиков разделились кардинально

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## АННОТАЦИЯ

На протяжении своей многовековой истории Россия неоднократно пыталась определить свое историческое предназначение, обозначить вектор и стратегию социально-политического развития, сформулировать ценностные предпочтения и целевую установку российского общественного бытия. Понятно, что без соответствующей системы идей, взглядов и теорий решить столь сложную по содержанию и грандиозную по целям задачу невозможно. В статье обосновывается возможность, необходимость и практическая значимость государственной идеологии, под сомнение поставлена целесообразность в нынешних исторических условиях сохранения конституционного запрета государственной или обязательной идеологии. Обращается внимание на то, что у России идеология государственного статуса в принципе имеется, основные ее содержательно-сущностные составляющие закреплены в Конституции страны, в соответствующих правовых актах, ежегодных президентских посланиях Федеральному Собранию, программах, доктринах и других политических документах. Это прежде всего концепция федеративного демократического правового социального светского государства в органическом единстве с традиционными для российской цивилизации идеалами, ценностями и приоритетами. Формат исследования — сравнительный институционально-функциональный.

**Ключевые слова:** государство; государственная идеология; власть; идеал; идеология; интерес государственный; интерес национальный; консерватизм; либерализм; национализм; патриотизм; ценности, цивилизация.

## Как цитировать

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## BACKGROUND

In accordance with Article 13 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, ideological and political diversity is recognized in Russia, and no ideology can be established as state or mandatory. However, the presence of such a constitutional norm does not mean that the issue of ideology is purely theoretical, detached from the real practices of state building and public administration. This is far from the case, especially when considering that Russia faces not only the economic, financial, and military power of the unfriendly West, but also the ideology of global hegemonism, chauvinistic arrogance, and resurgent Nazism. This means that Russia once again bears a significant historical responsibility, and without Russia, no serious issue on the world agenda can be constructively resolved in modern conditions.

It has reached the point where Ukraine, the state most mentally and culturally close to Russia, has been turned into an anti-Russian state, a “mercenary country” serving as the vanguard force of the political-ideological and armed struggle against the Russian world. All of this occurs under the guise of demagogic discussions about democracy, freedom, and social justice, and the supposedly all-conquering energy of liberal ideology. To divert attention, normatively convincing formulas and “beautiful” charters have been adopted, such as the Charter of Paris for a New Europe (Paris, 1990), the Charter on European Security (Istanbul, 1999), the Prospects of Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Security (Astana, 2010), On the Education of Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (Strasbourg, 2010), and the New Atlantic Charter (Cornwall, 2021). However, the Resolution titled “Combating the glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to the escalation of modern forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance” cannot be adopted at the UN Security Council level. The most ideologically independent democratic states oppose it.

The author highlights the particular relevance and difficulties of not only developing a state-level ideology but also creating an effective mechanism for corresponding ideological action. This is especially challenging given the variety of internal and external threats and uncertainties, including imperialist discrimination, geopolitical hegemonism, and the merging of liberalism with the ideology of radical nationalism and neocolonialism.

### Ideological Diversity: Its Strengths and Weaknesses

Against this background, it becomes clear that ideology, when it reflects objective processes and aligns with the true interests of the people, consolidates society and fills people's lives with creative content. If anyone thinks that there are states without ideology, they are mistaken. It is only in words and within certain propaganda clichés that the significance

of state (official) ideology is not recognized. In reality, everything is fundamentally different. It is no coincidence that Russophobia and neoliberalism build their redoubts on state foundations and under strict state control; Nazism, Banderaism, and neocolonialism are increasingly manifesting themselves. It is among ideologists that the sources of hostility toward the Russian monarchical past, hatred toward the communist Soviet past, Orthodoxy, Russian traditional values, and Russian civilization as a whole originate.

The vast majority of states within the Western democratic spectrum officially adhere to the principles of deideologization and pluralism. In several countries, official ideology is not spelled out and is often prohibited at the constitutional level. However, this does not mean that the authorities are indifferent to ideological issues and the ideological support of their policies. Deideologization, even in the most pluralistic systems, is merely a psychological and political trick, a strategy to guarantee favorable conditions for themselves and nullify the effectiveness of the ideology of political opponents. In this sense, the outrecuidance of the West and its propaganda expansion is simply off-scale<sup>1</sup>.

Therefore, there is no need to convince us that the transformation of an ideology into a state is a rejection of the basic principles of democracy, truth, and freedom. To prove the validity of such a judgment, one should not refer to J. Schumpeter, K. Mannheim, F. Hayek, S. Huntington, or F. Fukuyama, who predict a “clash of civilizations” and foresee the “end of history”, trying to convince us that ideology serves not the masses but exclusively the power elites and plays other roles in a free market than a reactionary one. Even less should one believe that liberalism has maintained its dominant role simply because it has abandoned its ideological status. Everything is exactly the opposite; liberalism holds its position quite firmly not because it is “beyond ideology”, but because, in the Western ideological context, it is the “number on ideology”.

One might think that the concepts of political pluralism and social tolerance, multi-party system and parliamentarism, multiculturalism, post-humanism, and ecophilosophy are not an ideology. Anyone who does not understand this and positions themselves beyond ideology is most probably narrow-minded. Professor F.I. Girenok is much closer to the truth, wittily noting that modern Western philosophy (aka ideology) has long “stopped dreaming <...> it can now only rave”<sup>2</sup>. How else can one react, for example, to a bill recently introduced in the US Congress called the Crucial Communism Teaching Act, which mandates teaching American schoolchildren and students about the “dangers of communism”, interpreting Marxism as one of the most

<sup>1</sup> V.V. Putin, Speech at the Plenary Session of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club, October 5, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Author's blog of Vyacheslav Danilov. Fyodor Girenok, “Philosophy is an endless conversation with oneself”. URL: [https://zavtra.ru/blogs/mislit\\_po-russki](https://zavtra.ru/blogs/mislit_po-russki) (access date 11/17/2023).

destructive political ideologies in human history, and claiming that it was not the United States or its satellites, not German fascism or racism, but exclusively communism that “led to the deaths of over one hundred million victims around the world”<sup>3</sup>.

How can one refute the assertion that in the politics and ideology of the modern West, there are virtually no established truths and principles that cannot be disregarded if necessary and beneficial? This leads to the features of a “pluralistic worldview” and propaganda activities officially encouraged by the authorities: distortion of truth and promotion of totalitarian values, formal bureaucratic declaration of the principles of international law and mutually beneficial cooperation of peoples, support for all kinds of “agents of influence,” the promotion of individualism, localism, and nationalism, and information and propaganda aggressiveness in accordance with the imperatives of “managed democracy.” The goal is simple: to ensure that competing states become ideologically disoriented, socially demoralized, and politically incapable of efficiently performing their fundamental functions.

Moreover, all this is presented as the dominance of the values of truth, rationality, and freedom. It does not matter whether this contradicts the interests of the majority and is a product of opportunistically oriented ruling elites. These elites often speak about the democratic expression of the people’s will (J. Kennedy), their commitment to the principles of humanism (B. Clinton), and the US as a supporter of “honest partnership” that always “resolutely opposes mass atrocities” (B. Obama). In the same tone, J. Biden emphasizes the values of “science, democracy, truth, and justice” in all his speeches. The hypocrisy is evident, but the main objective is to justify the benefits of “US global domination” and convince the world that the modern Russian elite is unable to “assess realistically its weaknesses and conduct a rational policy” (Z. Brzezinski) [1, pp. 13–20, 125]. Consequently, the West reserves for itself the ideology of *superiority and imperial messianism*, politics “from a position of strength”, tactics of indulging separatist illusions and nationalist ambitions, and the goal of inflicting strategic defeat on any enemy, Russia first of all. If this is challenging, then it suffices to achieve a reformatting of Russian reality according to their own patterns.

Western elites understand well that without ideology, it is impossible to ensure the proper orientation of public administration and international action. Without a well-designed general idea that integrates society, even the most energetic practical actions will inevitably turn into “a series of thoughtless, aimless, and incoherent steps” [2, p. 54]. Therefore, the issue of the state status of ideology, as a system of views, principles, and theories conceptually systematized on scientific grounds and presented in some

universality of views, is becoming increasingly relevant from philosophical, methodological, legal, practical, and political standpoints.

### **Ideology as a System of Ideals, Values, and Interests**

In the scientific concept, ideology is a worldview system that encompasses values, ideas, theories, views, and symbols that reflect the essence of real social existence and the objective patterns of its development. It can also be seen as a special form of philosophical awareness of the world, providing a rational-critical explanation, design, and purposeful transformation. Hence, there are various formats of research (structural, functional, institutional, systemic). The main point is that ideology does not exist independently as an autonomous construct. Ideology represents a specific cross-section of social space through corresponding ideals, value criteria, and normative guidelines.

Ideology:

- a) Determines social meanings and forms the ideological matrix of social existence.
- b) Sets the cultural-semantic, spiritual-moral, and political-managerial orientation of social action.
- c) Consolidates the society or, conversely, disintegrates it, worsening contradictions across the spectrum of social relations.
- d) Turns a person into an active participant in creating or destroying actions.
- e) Serves as the ideological basis for the programs of the state, political parties, and social movements.
- f) Is an essential component of the professional culture of state and corporate management.

Modern social philosophy presents many ideological concepts, progressive and reactionary, revolutionary and conservative, modernist and postmodernist, scientifically creative and toxically destructive, often in the form of myths, utopias, and fake constructions. Many people perceive ideology not as a scientific platform for explaining and transforming the world but as a form of illusory-subjectivist perception of reality (E. Durkheim, T. Geiger). Instead of a scientific-materialist understanding of history (K. Marx), it is seen as false knowledge that provides a distorted view of society due to class predilection and private interest, becoming a tool for camouflaging the real plans of the ruling elites. Therefore, socialist ideology, according to V.I. Lenin, is the science and ideology of building a state for the working people. We also see, “total ideology” manifesting in currents such as bureaucratic conservatism, conservative historicism, liberal democracy, and fascism (K. Mannheim).

This position is shared by many modern figures who present ideology solely as a tool of manipulation, deception, suppression, and abolition. It is no coincidence that in the European Union’s Regulation No. 2022/2065 on digital

<sup>3</sup> A bill on teaching the “danger of communism” in schools has been introduced into the US Congress. RIA News. URL: <https://ria.ru/20230909/ssha-1895121826.html> (access date 10/19/2023).

services (Digital Services Act), anything that can be interpreted as “alignment to the Russian state” and “dissemination of Kremlin narratives” is classified as ideology. Despite even the most convinced skeptics understanding that a highly scientifically valid ideology not only reflects the laws of social existence but also helps people understand historical goals and national tasks, determine the vision of their future, and “create history with open eyes” [3, p. 11, 646], issues arise with extreme ideologization. When politics becomes overly ideologized, the state, political parties, ruling elites, and their leaders struggle to adequately respond to current events and effectively solve pressing problems. Conversely, when ideology becomes excessively politicized, even the most reasonable ideas are hollowed out and gradually become rigid doctrines.

### Is There a Need to Impart the Ideology with State Status

Discussions on this matter have been ongoing for a long time, gaining particular intensity in recent years. Numerous scientists, politicians, government officials, public opinion leaders, and influential media representatives have weighed in. The participants in this debate are starkly divided.

*Some argue “against” state ideology*, asserting that in a democratically oriented society, there should be no ideology that claims official status. Their justifications vary but are compelling at first glance. They argue that state ideology is similar to a reverse theology, a state religion with its own “dogmas, scriptures, and saints” special to this social institution (N.A. Berdyaev). It is seen as “a mockery of human essence,” which should not be tied to a centralized, ideologically “regulated” economy that will inevitably lead to poverty (A.I. Solzhenitsyn). The era of grand integral ideologies, including communism with its fundamentally false goals, is over (A.N. Yakovlev). People need a country where they can live well, free from “ideological rubbish”, and lift themselves out of wretched existence and poverty (Yu. A. Levada). They argue that a modern, highly developed “consumer society” requires no ideology; instead, science, professionalism, and competence should take precedence (D. Bell, S.M. Lipset).

For supporters of deideologization and boundless tolerance, the belief that ideology not only unites but also divides, setting people against each other and provoking conflicts and even bloody confrontations, is particularly significant. They understand the law of unity and the struggle of opposites and have mastered the basic conditions for success: a) to unite, it is required first to disengage; b) everything depends on personnel, their ideological potential, professionalism, and organizational abilities; c) decisions should be made promptly and decisively, without endlessly consultations and delays, as any uncertainty will lead to negative results. Therefore, the problem of integrating

ideological and scientific aspects will likely remain unresolved for a long time<sup>4</sup>.

The Chairman of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, V.D. Zorkin, has repeatedly asserted that in true democracy and a rule-of-law state, no ideology should be established as state or mandatory. He gives several arguments to support his position.

Firstly, the current surge of advocating for the constitutional recognition of a state ideology appears at best untimely and at most dangerous, potentially leading to another societal split akin to the divide between “whites” and “reds”.

Secondly, the most active supporters of state ideology are political forces centered on the concept of social justice. However, they overlook the fact that the Constitution of the Russian Federation already allows for the fulfillment of basic social expectations related to legal legitimacy and social justice.

Thirdly, it is essential to understand that ideological pluralism does not mean abandoning ideas that unify and mobilize society. What is questionable is the necessity of a dominant ideology common to the entire society. Moreover, the Constitution, embodying the ideals, values, and strategic guidelines of state construction, allows this pluralism<sup>5</sup>.

K.V. Remchukov, the editor-in-chief of *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, is equally critical of state ideology. From his perspective, people are tired of returning to mythical values and origins, of endless division into friends and foes, and of an ambiguous ideology of continuity that resembles a return to condemned practices of the past. People desire love, happiness, freedom, money, and travel; they want to live with the reimagined possibilities and standards of today, not with the illusion of a distant future. State ideology relegates individual rights and freedoms to the background. If a country has a state ideology, there must be an enforcement body, a kind of “guard corps” policing actions, thoughts, and moods, and monitoring public statements of officials, representatives of public organizations, journalists, businessmen, and citizens. The ultimate conclusion is that a state shaping reality according to its own ideological patterns “is moving away from mass expectations at high speed and is ultimately doomed to failure”<sup>6</sup>. Hence, there are recommendations to decisively reject ideological illusions and focus on consumption and investment, revealing the creative and humanistic power of state deideologization.

*Others argue in favor* of state ideology, convinced that “it is impossible to build a sovereign state without state

<sup>4</sup> V.A. Yadov, “Ideology”, *Encyclopedic Sociological Dictionary*, edited by ed. G.V. Osipov, ISPI RAS, Moscow (1995).

<sup>5</sup> V.D. Zorkin, “Russian law: alternatives and risks in the conditions of the global crisis”, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 9, June 30 (2022).

<sup>6</sup> K.V. Remchukov, “People want to understand who they are and why they are in this life, to realize their identity”, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, December 7 (2021).



ideology" [4, p. 272], They believe ideology is the unifying force ensuring proper harmonization of relations between all components of the social organism. They argue that a country is not only defined by its borders, power, people, army, and economy but also by a "special highest ideological project" capable of ensuring mass support and effectively mobilizing the ruling elite [5, p. 490]. They contend that the state needs ideology, and people intuitively recognize this. In response to a 2016 survey by the Levada Center asking, "Does Russia need a state idea and/or ideology?" 75% of Russians affirmed the need, while 21% felt a basic national idea sufficed<sup>7</sup>. Ten years later, in November 2023, a survey of over 26.000 viewers and listeners of the Solovyov Live TV channel and Rossiya-1 radio showed that 88% were in favor of state ideology, with only 6% against it.

The positive attitude of society toward the issue of state ideology is not accidental and is largely explained by the anticipation of large-scale conflicts and fundamental changes of historical significance. People are concerned about Russia's political positioning in the modern global political landscape. Many want to understand their place in the historical process and the direction in which they are moving, whether toward the West or the East, the global North or the global South. Society seeks a clear and precise ideological framework that will define a country's internal and external political positioning for many years to come. Hence, there is a strong conviction that an ideology is needed, not as an attractive propaganda tool, but as a construct of high scientific content with corresponding mobilizing potential for state building and public administration. Moreover, the ideology must align with the identity of the people, combining traditions and social ideals, expressing a desire for truth and justice, and connecting to the deep roots of civilization.

At the St. Petersburg International Legal Forum 2023, the Head of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation, K.A. Chuychenko, highlighted that ideas and principles concerning the ideological foundations of Russian statehood and traditional values are not yet fully implemented in Russia. He pointed out that society is not entirely healthy from a legal, political, and ideological perspective and proposed that state ideology be consolidated in the Constitution as soon as possible. This perspective is shared by the Chairman of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, Doctor of Law A.I. Bastrykin, who publicly asserts that no society can exist without ideology. Speaking at the Derzhavin Readings conference, he suggests including state ideology in the Constitution. Professor of Law and Senator A.A. Klishas responded constructively to this proposal, and many deputies of the State Duma share a similar standpoint. Writer and famous political strategist T.N. Sergeytsev believes that the state must have an official ideology. With an office ideology,

there is no need to coerce people; without one, voids appear in the public consciousness, leading to instability, the dominance of violence, and monstrous forms of social life.

It is also essential to consider the Russian mentality and psychology, remembering that boundless freedom of social, ideological, and political creativity in Russia quickly turns into fruitless discussions and criticism, the creation of various political platforms, and party and anti-party groups. Instead of engaging in actual activities, people often focus on "improvements" and "reforms", revising even what is beneficial. During Soviet times, many officials were also reluctant to engage in real ideological creativity. Similar trends are evident today, with much talk about ideology but insufficient responsible scientific ideological work. This void is filled with so-called narratives, populism, and demagoguery. Consequently, we must confront various manifestations of liberal ideology, including Russophobia, hegemonism, claims of divine choseness, neo-Nazism, Orange revolutions, and ethnolinguistic conflicts.

*Others discuss the possibility of state ideology in the form of a clearly articulated state idea*, noting that the constitutional prohibition of official ideology is not insurmountable. If there is a public demand, necessary amendments can be made. They argue that there is no special need to introduce state ideology through a specific constitutional provision; corresponding ideological postulates can be presented in other official documents, as philosopher and political analyst B.V. Mezhuев suggests. Mezhuев substantiates his position convincingly using specific examples. Examining the history and results of perestroika, he highlights how the political elite had at least five ideological concepts for the perestroika strategy (conservative modernization, authoritarian market, "cultural autonomy", new thinking, Westernism), Mezhuев demonstrates that in the absence of a clear official party-state ideological stance, all these strategies failed. In an atmosphere of "general disappointment in prospects" and the collision of numerous ideological and political alternatives, the Soviet model of socialism was defeated, and the USSR ceased to exist as an international legal entity. The lack of a scientifically based ideology and program of action during perestroika was the main reason for the defeat of the "intellectual class" in Russia [6].

His Holiness the Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia shares a similar view regarding the need for a state ideology, expressing his firm conviction that what is needed is a life-giving worldview with a "unique Russian value paradigm" rather than an ideology. Those who love the Motherland and value truth and moral integrity do not need ideology; a national idea is sufficient, and we have it. This national idea encompasses a rich spiritual and cultural tradition, sincere love and devotion to the Motherland, respectful interaction with representatives of different nationalities and religions, and a rejection of state atheism. Therefore, the ban on mandatory state ideology is completely justified. Patriarch

<sup>7</sup> Does Russia need a national idea? URL: [vm.ru/Society](https://vm.ru/Society) (access date 11/19/2023).

Kirill emphasizes that “the unity of culture, which consists in peoples’ awareness of a common historical destiny and common spiritual and moral values, which, in turn, gives rise to a unity of worldview”, is more important than ideology<sup>8</sup>.

*Group 4 adopts a “neutral position”* characterized by a *skeptical and dismissive* attitude toward ideological issues. For them, “it doesn’t matter what happens in the sphere of ideology, worldview, and spirituality”. They are convinced that in a world where the ideals of liberalism, freedom, and democracy prevail, ideology “practically does not affect life”. Instead, everything is determined by the fundamental (original) values of pragmatism, consumption, and “steadily increasing prosperity”. If these values fail, then everything is permissible, including chauvinism, racist squabbles, hegemonism, colonialism, double standards, and hypocrisy.

Supporters of this ideological orientation likely create television series that promote not only honest work, human dignity, responsibility, and patriotism, but also an outwardly attractive, carefree lifestyle. Young families are depicted living in luxurious mansions, driving expensive cars purchased with unexplained funds, and vacationing at overseas resorts, all while those around them. Characters of dubious employment appear in rich outfits, exhibiting haughty behavior and sexual liberties. This portrayal is supplemented with elements of criminality, police abuses, and obligatory praise for the advantages of the Western way of life.

Meanwhile, few people ask whether the West is capable of abandoning the ideology of Russophobia and nationalism. Why are huge amounts of money being invested in various institutions, foundations, and civil societies for the ideological reorientation and spiritual and moral destabilization of the Russian world? Is this just political tactics? No, it is not. Today, neoliberalism, Russophobia, various forms of racism, and Nazism are not relics of a past era but practically the official ideology of the Western ruling elites<sup>9</sup>.

## Status and Content Characteristics of State Ideology

Ideology is omnipresent in human life; it has always existed and continues to function effectively today. It operates systematically and purposefully, manifesting not only in outwardly attractive and positive forms but also in carefully disguised, often extremely cynical ways. When profitable, it stops at nothing, employing tools of ideological pressure, political fake positioning, export of corruption and blackmail, labeling that degrades human dignity, and public insults of political leaders. Is it no coincidence that the West exclusively qualifies the anti-Nazi special military operation

as aggression, that even the most truthful information about Russia is invariably accompanied by the label “rogue state”, and that any political event in Russia is presented as a manifestation of authoritarianism and moral dishonesty. Simultaneously, there is a conspicuous silence about the sanctions policy, the true goals of Western military advances to Russia’s borders, and the intentions of those who enshrine NATO membership as a constitutional norm. Instead, there is an ideology of falsification, double standards, hypocrisy, and unipolarity, encapsulated in the dichotomy of “either us or them”, “either with us or against us”.

V.V. Putin, immediately after his election to the presidency, declared his commitment to democratic values, the priorities of civilized liberalism, and the deideologization of public administration. He expressed his firm conviction that the new Russian idea represents an organic combination of universal human values such as primordial Russian values such as state sovereignty, great power statehood, patriotism, spirituality, national equality, and federalism. He considered ideology, in the status of a legally enshrined state political and legal institution, to be an unproductive construct.

Over time, the President’s positions regarding the ideological foundations of politics and public administration became increasingly clear. In his 2012 Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, he stated that “having discarded the ideological clichés of the previous era, we have lost many moral guidelines”, which led to an indifference to public affairs, a willingness to tolerate corruption and greed, and manifestations of extremism and offensive behavior. In October 2021, at the plenary session of the Valdai International Discussion Club, the President demonstrated his attitude toward “healthy (moderate) conservatism”, expressing confidence that this concept of optimal conservatism is most adequate in an environment of “increasing risks and hazards”.

At a meeting with the leadership and heads of party factions of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on July 7, 2022, the President highlighted the international component of the Russian political and ideological concept. He emphasized Russia’s commitment to the principles and norms of international law; fruitful international cooperation based on the values of equality and justice; rejection of any forms of supranational control, and denial of the ideology of liberal-globalist egocentrism. The President underscored the key principles of a fair and democratic world order: openness and interconnectedness of the world; respect for diversity as the foundation of joint development; maximum representation in global governance structures; general security based on a balance of interests; equitable access to development benefits; and rejection of the dictates of the rich or powerful.

Putin’s statements about the “fifth column” and the need to cleanse society of “national traitors” have also gained attention. This is particularly relevant considering that even

<sup>8</sup> Report of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill at the plenary session of the XXV World Russian People’s Council, November 28, 2023 URL: <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/6080946.html> (access date 12/02/2023).

<sup>9</sup> V.V. Putin, Speech at the plenary session of the World Russian People’s Council “The Present and Future of the Russian World,” November 28, 2023.

among the so-called national patriots, true patriotism is often lacking. There is much more cosmopolitanism in their position, as reflected in their sentiments of being “people of the world” and their ability to live and work anywhere. As A.D. Kerimov writes, this attitude induces cold indifference and contempt for the urgent needs of fellow citizens. Their plans exclude the intensive creative development of the outstanding and advanced spiritual contributions of human genius from the Western ecumene. Instead, they aim to forcibly and crudely introduce foreign, often sterile meanings into the living, sensitive fabric of the great, ancient, and original Russian culture [7, p. 36].

The President increasingly often speaks about the *ideology of truth and justice*, the ideology of objectivity and science. In a speech on September 30, 2022, at the ceremony for the admission of four new regions to Russia, and later in the Concept of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (Decree No. 229 of March 31, 2023), he systematically outlined his idea of the foundations of Russian national ideology. According to him, Russia is a unique Eurasian country-civilization with a centuries-old history and its own logic of formational development. It is a strong centralized state based on legal, spiritual, and moral values such as the unity of Russian history, democracy, legality, and human dignity. Russia has a special mission in the fight against Westernism, neocolonialism, geopolitical hegemonism, religious discrimination, nationalism, and racism. He further emphasizes that Russia should not fall into the euphoria of being chosen or superior; instead, it should rely on genuine values and be guided by its own sovereign worldview and civilizational identity, rather than borrowed concepts.

What has been articulated can rightfully be termed a conceptually formalized national identity, serving as the ideology of Russian constitutionalism. This is reflected in the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the National Security Strategy, the Foreign Policy Concept, Fundamentals of State Policy for the preservation and strengthening of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, priority national projects, and other statutory acts and management decisions. However, values cannot be mandated by decree or law. The critical aspect is determining mechanisms of ideological transformations without descending into arrogant authoritarianism and bureaucratic formalism.

Proposals to amend Article 13 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which prohibits state or compulsory ideology, should not be dismissed. Constitutions are adopted under specific historical conditions and are influenced by particular interests and motivational factors. As conditions change, constitutional norms must also evolve to meet contemporary requirements. State ideology sets the strategy and ensures the success of social development, fosters patriotism, and helps society and authorities realize their spiritual essence and historical destiny. It must be a scientifically grounded structure with mobilizing

potential. Ideological uncertainty in the context of political pluralism, market freedoms, and lack of convictions can lead to cognitive dissonance, ideological discomfort, and sociocultural fragmentation.

The presence of the state’s own scientifically substantiated ideological context, tested by historical experience and modern practice, not only does not contradict the principles of legal legitimacy and democratic values but, on the contrary, ensures the strategically sustainable viability of the state and puts a strong barrier against the destructive forces of soullessness and crime.

## CONCLUSIONS AND GENERALIZATIONS

Ideology is a philosophical and ideological reflection of objective reality, integrating content and form, ideal and real, spatial and temporal. It represents the organic unity of ideals, values, interests, and goals of the historical life of people within a scientific framework of meanings, principles, and indicators. This unity of *science and practice forms* the foundation of powerful creative and developmental potential. When ideology becomes confined to narrow interests, it ceases to function as a comprehensive worldview and leads to social instability, erroneous decisions, and potential collapse.

Centuries of historical experience, including the Soviet era, have demonstrated several key points:

1. A state without a solid economic basis and a corresponding ideological superstructure cannot endure. The rejection of scientific ideology leads to policies that counteract science, diminish culture, promote neoliberalism, double standards, and secular universalism, and stimulate the ideology of transhumanism, national superiority, and imperialist discrimination.

2. Ideological concepts arise from a deep understanding of historical, economic, spiritual, moral, and sociocultural development. They are expressed by conceptually thinking representatives of the scientific community and must be carefully introduced into public consciousness. Simplification and irresponsibility in this process are unacceptable.

3. Any ideology striving for self-preservation and dominance tends to become rigid, dogmatic, and intolerant of dissent. Failure to evolve can lead to its degradation and the destruction of strategically significant social and state foundations.

4. The failure of the current government often signifies that its adopted ideological postulates are misaligned with the current realities and needs of society. This misalignment necessitates that these postulates be updated to meet the new situation’s demands. If this alignment is not achieved, alternative forces representing different ideologies and values will eventually seize power.

5. Any ideological structure, no matter how perfect it may seem, is not self-sufficient and does not represent



a totally completed system, it requires constant philosophical and critical rethinking, value foundation clarification, and conceptual updating. This updating process must avoid postmodern tendencies such as media manipulation and the artificial construction of inauthentic narratives and simulacrum.

We stand firmly on the side of law, truth, democracy, freedom, and human dignity. This is the essence of the ideology of the Russian state civilization, a commitment to sovereign statehood and legality, ensuring socio-political unity. We reject liberal-globalist egocentrism

and prohibit propaganda that incites social, racial, national, and religious discord. Our aim is not merely an “ideology of democracy,” but an ideology rooted in Russian civilization, guiding our country, people, and state along their own creative path. Currently, we excel in forums and conferences, with a keen understanding of the symptoms and biorhythms of this challenging era. However, we struggle to provide practical solutions to many contemporary challenges from an ideologically adequate standpoint. This indicates a need for a more powerful potential of knowledge and resources.

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