



«Ideologies at crossroads: old concepts and new paradigms».

International Young Scholars Conference

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Session 1. Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of Studying Ideologies: Old Concepts, New Realities

Ideology is a phenomenon of the Modern and Contemporary times. The 20th century is often called the ‘age of ideologies’, a period of intense confrontation of ideas and worldviews. Although envisioned to lead humanity towards a brighter future, they ended up raising a variety of challenging questions instead. Classical ‘major ideologies’, namely liberalism, conservatism, socialism, which have long dominated social and political discussions, have undergone significant changes over time. Consequently, nationalism, communism, feminism, and environmentalism appeared.

How can we study this diversity of ideas and concepts today? Discourse, narrative, and identity are integral elements of ideological structures and at the same time tools for their deconstruction and analysis. Are traditional concepts suitable for the analysis of new realities? Do ideologies emerge or are they created? How do they disseminate? What is the role they play in the modern world? How is their essence changing? Are classical ideologies really becoming a thing of the past or are they just undergoing significant transformations – and what might come next? We suggest discussing all these questions within the first session.

Session 2. Conflicting Ideologies – Ideological Conflicts

Any conflict is likely to have many premises and reasons. Yet if a conflict is scrutinized, one could find out that defense and security issues or economic matters turn out to be of marginal importance with ideology being at premium.

Today ideology is a ubiquitous construct that answers uncomfortable questions on why one is engaged in a conflict, what goals parties involved pursue, why an adversary is so dangerous. With geopolitical turbulence being on the rise and those questions multiplying, ideologies become indispensable guidelines and a moral compass. The world tends to be transparent if one uses a certain lens. The right perspective clarifies who is the good and bad guy and where real power lies.

Young scholars are invited to discuss how conflicting parties tend to legitimize their actions through ideological constructs, whether ideas and values could forge strong alliances or entail harsh hostility, and what instruments are meant to unite or divide.

Session 3. Ideologisation of the Economy and Economic Ideologies: Business as Usual?

The economic development of society largely shapes the environment in which ideologies rise and fall. Amid global geoeconomic fragmentation, the principles of interaction among players on 'political markets' are gradually changing. The session will focus on systemic transformations that affect both the behaviour of individual economic agents and the global economy as a whole. Participants are welcome to discuss the following:

- How do economic policies of individual states change due to various exogenous and endogenous shocks? How have the theoretic foundations of economic policy evolved? Are there any new tools for overcoming market failures and managing externalities?
- How will international mechanisms and rules of economic policy coordination evolve in the short and long term? How could multinational enterprises contribute to these mechanisms?
- Innovation-driven economic development: how do different countries strike a balance between technological sovereignty and international cooperation? Is forming economic and 'technological' alliances based on ideological affinity efficient? What tools can be used to control economic activities of countries (e.g. sanctions, boycotts, tariffs)? What prerequisites and rationale are necessary for building alternative monetary and financial systems? What could the functions of such systems be?

Session 4. "Worst Enemy": Instruments Used to Build a Discourse Reflecting Political Antagonism

The current deterioration of relations between global powers has brought attention to the tools used to build public discourse reflecting antagonistic tendencies. The conflicting interests of key actors in international relations usually manifest in the space of information and ideas as well. Applying various means to influence public opinion, states broadcast narratives meant to strengthen their position and discredit narratives of the opponent by applying various tools to influence public opinion. These are traditional and new media; information and cultural activities; soft power and public diplomacy; canceling and propaganda; censorship and self-censorship. Some instruments aim to promote the intended messages and to instill them in the public mind, whereas others are designed to prevent the spread of undesirable messages or to deconstruct them.

The panel discussion is focused on the following: which techniques and tools actors use to build supportive public discourse; in which ways

information campaign of the opponent can be disrupted in traditional media and in the Internet; what are the mechanisms of ideological control over media and the space of information and ideas in general (within one country, one region, on global scale); how canceling and other censorship tools can be applied during the ideological confrontation; at which point the ideologization of public discourse turns into hate speech?

Session 5. Ideological “Wind of Change” in the Political Landscape

Over thirty years ago, Fukuyama’s idea of the ‘end of history’, which implied the end of mankind's ideological evolution, provoked considerable discussion within expert and academic circles. Nevertheless, the liberal-democratic tradition failed to become a universal standard across the world. Furthermore, liberalism has become an increasingly powerful driver of conflict within societies in many countries and in the international arena. Political landscape is currently undergoing fundamental transformations. The narratives from both the Right and the Left have begun fragmenting rapidly, leading to chaotic political discourse. The political landscape has been infiltrated by new powers, represented by anti-globalists, greens, populists, and other revisionists. Environmental, energy and climate agendas have been dramatically politicized and lead to drastic polarization. Consequently, the only constant of the current political spectrum lies in its visible crisis and uncertain prospects.

Does the current ideological transformation share a common course? Is the emergence of new big ideas feasible? Are the ‘old’ ideologies outdated and are the ‘new’ ones truly innovative? Can a constructive "ideological dialog" between the West and non-West occur? How are social development and different ideological frameworks related?

Session 6: Intellectual Hegemony of the Western Ideas: Is There Life after Death?

For decades, the question of the state and prospects of the political and ideological field of the Western countries has been an issue of heated discussion in the world science. Does the (neo)liberal project remain dominant in the ideological spectrum of Europe, North America and other kindred countries? Do right-conservative (Christian-democratic) and social-democratic approaches still have potential? To what extent are varieties of right-wing populism, anti-capitalism, environmentalism and libertarianism in demand as alternatives to liberalism in Western societies? During the session we invite you to discuss the potential consequences of this ideological fragmentation in Western societies. Are there any specific policy initiatives that can help mitigate its negative effects? What new ideas and tools are emerging in Western states to maintain their dominant position? Is it possible to overcome ideological divisions and elaborate a more cohesive political discourse in the West, and if so, on what basis?

Session 7. Ideologies of New Centers and Centers of New Ideologies

In the 21st century the world is moving towards multipolarity. New political and economic centers are integrating into the global system, becoming competitive in various sectors and presenting competition to the Western world. Objective development factors such as economic growth, demographic changes, access to resources and technological progress significantly influence the formation of ideologies of non-Western countries. Some of them adopted development models inherited from metropolises while others chose their own way.

Using their unique experiences and historical backgrounds, these countries create ideologies that reflect their individual ambitions and courses of development. In the ideological context of the "unity in diversity" of the non-Western world a common thread is the pursuit of sustainable development, social justice and strengthening of national sovereignty. At the same time, each country brings unique features to its ideology based on national interests and cultural values. Nowadays it is non-Western countries, gaining significant political and economic weight, that are beginning to actively promote their ideologies internationally.

How do developing countries perceive old ideologies and what objective development factors had the greatest impact on their ideological choices? Have non-Western countries been able to adapt old ideologies to their unique developmental conditions and how did it affect their current ideologies? Are non-Western countries successful in promoting their own ideologies and what tools do they use? What is the position of new centers of power in contemporary ideological conflicts and how do they use objective development factors to strengthen their ideological positions? These issues are proposed to be discussed within the session.

Section 8. Beyond Major Narratives: Ideologies of Subregions and Non-Governmental Subjects

The process of forming new political and economic architectures for specific regions and the world at large is at the core of the emergence and spread of new ideologies at various levels. Among the sources of these ideologies are small states and non-governmental actors. As the global structure undergoes transformations, the roles of traditional world leaders go through changes, and new centers of power arise, there is an evolution in the international self-positioning of small and medium powers. At the same time, the roles of various non-governmental actors and transnational players, each with their own foreign policy agendas and ideological narratives, also experience a shift. These new centers of power and actors not only exert increasing influence on regional and global processes but also offer alternative agendas and models of foreign policy identity, capable not only of successfully competing with existing ideologies but also of challenging them, providing a basis for separatist tendencies of certain groups.

How has the role of small states and various non-governmental actors (NGOs, separatist movements, Islamist organizations, media, etc.) changed in the global context? What makes their role unique when it comes to creating ideological narratives? What common features distinguish the ideologies of small states and non-governmental actors from those of traditional players in world political processes? How do they differ depending on the region, political, economic, and cultural factors? How do small states and non-governmental actors spread their influence (from “soft power” to radicalism)? All these questions are to be discussed at the session.

Session 10. International Regimes and Global Governance: not the ‘End of History’

Today’s world sees new global, macro-regional and transregional spaces being formed, which necessitates the development of optimal mechanisms for multilateral political and legal regulation. With the Yalta-Potsdam institutions becoming less effective, regional integration projects, informal interstate associations and various mega-regional agreements are developing. What are the trends and prospects of both established and emerging international regimes? Which of the new transnational spaces require regulation? What is the role of ideology? Can ideology engender unity, fragmentation or divisions? What is the role of multilateral institutions and international organizations amid ideological differences? How does the political agenda these institutions and organizations promote influence prospects for international cooperation? Are there any universal values that may become the basis of the future world order? What will this world order be like? What formats of international cooperation seem to be the best?

Session 10 (open discussion). Post-Ideology: What Comes Next?

The Council of Young Scientists cordially invites you to take part in the open discussion “Post-Ideology: What Comes Next?” We invite you to discuss: Is it outdated to think within the framework of ideologies after the twentieth century? Have grand narratives disappeared? What took their place? What are post-ideologies? Is the absence of ideology also an ideology?

The discussion will start with the opening presentation of Alexandra Yakovleva, PhD (Political Science), Lead Researcher of IMEMO. Let’s share ideas!