eurozine

Axel Kaehne

Russian conceptions of statehood and western political theory

Liberal statehood – East and West

In the first article of a three–part–series debate on Russian statehood, Axel Kaehne argues that western political theory has often been superimposed on Russia without redefining the concepts of liberalism and statehood in the Russian context. He analyses two different models of liberal statehood that have come out of Russia in the last decade and reconsiders the implications for Western political theory.

For the last decade, Russian political scientists and theorists have attempted to define the conditions for liberal statehood in their country. In the wake of the failure of the liberal market reforms this turned increasingly into an uphill struggle. For the wider public, liberal statehood came to be synonymous with laissez–faire economics and kleptomaniac politics. The immediate results of the market reforms seemed to confirm that liberal economics is little more than a byword for unchecked dominance of the economically powerful in politics and the shameless enrichment of the few.

In the face of such widely held perceptions, it must appear nigh impossible to redefine liberalism as a form of politics which privileges the many rather than the few. Still some Russian theorists have consistently tried to salvage some concept of liberalism from under the rubble of failed reforms. If this work fails, the alternative would undoubtedly mean the return of authoritarian politics which, although currently attractive to a wider Russian public disenchanted with the mimicry of liberal politics, might restore a façade of law and order for the time being. Ultimately however, they would only delay the immense work of restructuring Russian political life in the face of the challenges that Russia will have to confront. To understand why authoritarian solutions to Russia's current problems represent *cul–de–sacs* in the long term rather than genuine way–outs, liberal conceptions of statehood as they have been conceptualised in the Western debate can prove to be of considerable value. After all, the idea of historical particularity notwithstanding, Russia treads a path that one way or another has been walked before. To recognize that similar experiences can be of immense value in charting the future way of Russian politics is not tantamount to neglecting differences but a first step in reintegrating Russian politics into a wider theoretical framework that disallows dogmatic assertions of otherness. This is where comparative political theory can fulfil a much needed didactic role.

I will look at two particular conceptions of statehood that have been formulated over the last ten years or so. Both have, in their own field, been hugely influential. Although they approach the topic from widely different perspectives, I will maintain that both provide unique insights into the way we

need to theorise liberal statehood in the context of Russian post–communist transformation. The two specific conceptions I will delineate briefly below present us with some lessons that other conceptions would fail to produce. These lessons fall into two distinct categories: Firstly, they say something about the way Russian theorists reconstruct the Western theoretical heritage of liberalism. This process of reconstruction acts almost as a filter by dissecting and reconstituting the Western terms of reference in relation to Russian circumstances. Thereby Western conceptions acquire new meaning and are often re–located into new semantic relations which profoundly transform their interpretative cohesion. Debates and their terms of reference seem to become non–transferable this way but the understanding of this process can guide us in our search for connecting points or commonalities which could act as launching platforms for a shared debate between East and West.

One simple and apparent example would be the term "liberal" itself. Its meaning differs widely over the world, not least within the Western debate. Americans mean something quite different than British academics when they refer to liberalism or "liberal". Not less so does the meaning of "liberal" in Russia differ from Western connotations.

Yet, the acknowledgement of the historical conditionality of terminology and its plurality represents a tremendous step towards reconstituting a trans–national debate, and takes us beyond the mere recognition of insurmountable differences. On this account, the two conceptions of liberal statehood constitute a viable contribution to a debate that still needs to be shaped, and the critique that I will formulate about them is to be taken as a recognition of the seriousness of their attempts to theorize liberal statehood.

Moreover, and secondly, to relate parts of the Russian debate on liberal statehood to the Western debate can be helpful in revealing the inaccuracies or insufficiencies of Western liberal state theory. Political theorists in the West have tried over the last decade or so to unrelentingly reveal these blind spots in the Western idea of liberal statehood. Margaret Canovan called them implicit assumptions which act as unacknowledged prerequisites of the theory of the liberal political order.[1] One of these blind spots concerns the fact that liberal state formation seems to presuppose the existence of a nation–state, something that has particular significance in the Russian context with its imperial legacy. The fact that liberals in Western Europe have become increasingly hostile to the exclusive notion of nationality rendered them often insensitive to this aspect. Since the need to rectify this situation has become clear, considerable studies have been undertaken in the West since.

The two conceptions outlined below can serve a similar purpose. By illustrating the limits of Western theories of a liberal political order they can question implicit and explicit assumptions of these theories that Western theorists often take for granted. This does not necessarily translate into a non–applicability of Western theories of statehood and reinforce a Russian idea of (national or historical) particularity but enriches a debate that for far too long has concentrated on often exclusively Western dimensions.

The objective of this article is twofold: It aims to relate Russian theories of statehood to the Western debate and in doing so reintroduce an appropriate theoretical diversity, and, on the other hand, to contribute to the Russian debate by subjecting the two conceptions to a critique from the perspective of established Western conceptualisations. I have selected two works that, in my opinion, represent two valuable contributions to Russian political theory,

Gaidar's *Gosudarstvo i Evolutsia*[2] and Akhiezer and Il'in's *Rossiskaia Gosudarstvennost*[3] Although both are rooted in different theoretical premises and debates they can equally serve our purpose set out above.

In discussing Gaidar's conception of statehood I hope to illustrate one of those blind spots of recent Western political theory, the problem of "first or initial acquisition" of property. The fact that this problem has more recently slipped out of view in Western political theory is quite odd given that Locke as well as Hobbes have already wrestled with this problem and deemed it of crucial importance. Gaidar reiterates its significance for any liberal state theory. Or, to put it differently, we need to pay more attention to the prerequisites for our theoretical enterprise. Most of them might remain implicit rather than explicit and this can lead to disastrous results when re–applied in different contexts where these preconditions are absent, such as the Russian market reforms.

Akhiezer's approach is more sociological than politico–theoretical. Yet, his way of theorizing statehood reintroduces a question that has become more and more urgent, not least in view of recent global developments after 11 September. He seems to assume that any successful liberal state formation must be based on a concurrence of liberal societal attitudes and the liberal state apparatus. In brief, he claims nothing less than that liberal civilisation is a prerequisite for liberal statehood. Society needs to be permeated by liberal norms and principles so that the state and the wider societal realm are based on the same foundation. This would prevent the destructive mechanism of inversions to take place where political leaders, in their attempt to respond to societal demands, oscillate between traditional and modern policies. Since Russia, according to Akhiezer, is in a state of semi–modernisation, these policies would impinge either way on the way of life of one or another part of the population. Hence also the overwhelming amount of coercion in Russian history. This is little else but a civilisational conception of statehood, something that has been hotly debated in the West more recently with regard to the compatibility of Islam with Western values of tolerance and respect.[4] Yet I will argue that such a civilisational approach, though fashionable, is misguided. Still, Akhiezer's account of Russian liberal statehood can illuminate the extent to which Russian theorists dissociate Western terminology from interpretative contexts and redefine them in the terms of reference that have historical significance for Russia. There is no bad intent here. Akhiezer's concept of liberal statehood, as we will see, just makes more sense in the Russian context and is well argued for. However, it undercuts the Western conceptual frame of the debate on liberal statehood and therefore renders Western models incompatible to Russia. This might indicate that at the core of the applicability of Western liberalism, we can detect terminological tectonics rather than actual differences.

The last part of this article will deconstruct this shift of meaning and attempt to re–construct the chances of Russian liberal statehood.

Gaidar and private property as foundation for liberal politics

Having been very much the "public face" of the market reforms in Russia in the early nineties, Gaidar's more theoretical work, encapsulated in *Gosudarstvo i Evolutsia*, possesses a centrality for the liberal reforms that few other works have. Yet, I am not concerned here with the results of these liberal reforms but with his contribution to the theoretical debate in Russia that is still taking shape. His argument in *Gosudarstvo i Evolutsia* bears the hallmark of Marxist terminology but also of a libertarian influence which in the West came to be

epitomised by such figures as Robert Nozick and Friedrich von Hayek. Yet, his approach adopts the inherited interpretative framework of earlier (and still continuing) Russian debates.

These frameworks are mostly dichotomous or dualistic in character: East–West, European–Asian, weak society and strong state versus strong civil associations and disengaged state. In his work, Gaidar consistently reiterates these dichotomous interpretations. Additionally, his main argument rests on an assumption that goes back to Wittvogel and Marx, something that has been reformulated by Richard Pipes.[5] Gaidar argues that Russia is characterized by the absence of the most fundamental category of property – land ownership. This has determined Russian history for centuries.[6] Equally for Gaidar, this lack of secured property rights functions as an element of differentiation from the West and inhibits the successful introduction of market reforms in the long run.

Gaidar couples this argument with an analysis of the status and role of the state elite, the bureaucracy in Russian history. Their predominant position in the state administration has allowed them to appropriate state property to their own advantage. To maintain their position, the bureaucracy consistently prevented the institution of stable property rights and consequently the development of diversifying power centres in the political realm. Since the bureaucracy had thus navigated itself into the position of a de facto owner of state property, the retention of state property and the prevention of further distribution of it would effectively mean the centralisation of political power in the hands of this small elite group originally developed as an administrative tool by the imperial state. The result is the fateful wedding of political with economic power.

Hence Gaidar's insistence that only a further distribution of property can introduce the conditions for a liberal polity and overcome the harmful concentration of political power in Russia. Here the main drift of the market reforms originate: to diversify ownership creates the conditions for free politics. The security of property is elementary for such a transition. Gaidar emphasises that the constant confiscation of property has always undermined these rights and therefore proved a stumbling bloc for ownership in Russia. Legally secured property rights are the foundation for the liberalisation of politics. Only this can interrupt the constant reinforcement of the vicious circle where property had been the "eternal booty of (political) power"[7] , i.e. of the bureaucracy.

The weakness of the Russian state has its roots here in the predominant role of the bureaucracy which prioritises state activities in its own interests. Thus, on one hand, civil society remains weak and politics is subjected to the will of a small elite. On the other hand, however, the state also appears weak since it fails to generate a lively political arena which would increase its legitimacy. Gaidar characterises Russian society by three features. Firstly, property and statehood have become inseparable over time. Secondly, political power is inevitably prioritized and concentrated in the hand of a small administrative elite. And thirdly, since property is secondary and constantly under threat of confiscation by the state, it lacks the stimulating character necessary for any economic activities which it acquires in any "normal" market economies.

Gaidar argues that Russia has lingered in a mediate position throughout her history (with the exception of the Stalinist era) where property was never entirely appropriated by the state or entirely legalized. State interests that would normally be shaped by the interplay of political forces in a free arena of

discussion and electoral competition (i.e. the constant consensual reformulation of the common good) had mostly disappeared. They were replaced by the aims and objectives of state officials.

Established property relations as conditions of liberal statehood

This in itself makes fascinating reading even though Gaidar's interpretation runs mostly alongside agreed historical scholarship. Perhaps inadvertently, Gaidar provides us here with a sound argument as to why there is little sense in posing the question of liberal statehood in Russia in the dualism of "weak–strong". A strong state on the basis of an unmodified structure of property relations and position of the bureaucracy would only reinforce and privilege further the already strong administrative clique that held Russia in its grip for almost the entirety of her modern history.

This points to the intricate problem of "first or initial acquisition" that has ramifications for the future state's legitimacy and its chances to be a projection of the interests and conceptions of the common good that people harbour. Rousseau's critique of inherent injustices of any contract that originates in inequity is particularly poignant here. Rousseau argued that state building which proceeds from the position of inequality of the participants can only ever reproduce or even magnify these inequalities.c[8] It is a forlorn hope that in the process of state formation people would be able to rectify or augment injustices as contract theorists often think. Hobbes and Locke were well aware of this problem and therefore supplemented their contract theories with ideas that specified under which conditions "initial acquisition" of property is justified so that it would not distort people's negotiating position in the contractual procedure.

Let us briefly recapitulate Gaidar's argument up to this point. There are two valuable conclusions to be drawn so far. The first relates to the way we need to theorize Russian statehood. The second indicates the significance of historical conditions and the fact that liberal statehood cannot simply be the result of a deduction from allegedly universal basic principles. With regard to the first, Gaidar's thought illustrates the difficulty to theorize political order on the assumption that (legalized and legally guaranteed) private property predates the state. This is not much more than a convenient fiction and represents the most important lesson for Western political theorists distilled from the Russian context. It questions the reliability of the prerequisite for theorising liberal statehood that there is a widely acceptable and legalised distribution of property. Often this simply does not exist. In fact, in the post–communist context of Eastern Europe political transformations necessarily occurred simultaneously to immense transactions of formerly "collectivised" property.

With regard to the second point, Gaidar's argument shows that the dichotomous interpretative framework of "weak/strong" state is of limited use. Political scientists might justifiably speak of the problems an incapacitated state might pose in times of transition[9] but this still does not address the more important question of "what to do with this state". States advance conceptions of the common good for the whole society and this determination is paramount to a theory of liberal statehood. In a liberal theoretical framework the state is the trustee of people's interests and political desires, not an entity which pursues its own independent interests for its own sake disregarding the populace.

From this perspective we can identify the range of issues Gaidar has been dealing with as problems of the *form* of liberal statehood. This however, takes us only so far. The crucial controversy in liberal political theory has and would however revolve around the *content* of statehood. The Russian debate so far has rarely advanced beyond the questions of the form of state. Yet, beyond the question of strength or weakness of the Russian state lies the future battlefield on which liberal statehood will flounder or claim victory. Akhiezer's thought furnishes us with a helpful hand in charting the dimensions of this field.

Akhiezer and liberal civilisation

For Western political theory, the question as to which and how far the state shall promote a particular conception of the good[10] has been of utmost importance. Liberal theorists take the overbearing power of the state as their starting point. States are furnished with capacities that exceed by far the combined power of any societal group or association. Hence this power requires utmost care and safeguards against abuse – something that resonates only too well with the totalitarian experience of Russia in the last century. Most liberals would agree with conservatives that a conception of statehood that relinquishes *any* idea of the common good would seem unreasonable and might result in the slow but inevitable disintegration of the polity as a whole.

To live without any conception about the aims and objectives of political order will fail to engender the minimum of necessary support from the population which seems indispensable for the long term sustenance of any state. The concept of state neutrality here is misleading (although still not entirely out of fashion in the West) since states have and probably even must promote certain principles that can guide people in living together in modern societies. Historically, even Western states which pride themselves on their tolerance of all forms of living have at times aggressively privileged one or another form of religious, political, or societal community. Northern Ireland and its time of troubles might serve here as a grim reminder that religious strife is never far from the surface even in liberal societies.

The question for liberals has therefore been what a liberal conception of statehood ought to look like. Such a conception must be capable of mustering the support of its population but at the same time should not advance a particular conception of happiness. After all, a significant feature of modern societies is their social, ethnic, and religious diversity. Any prescription of a particular (exclusive) conception of the good must by definition discriminate against some members of – something entirely unacceptable to liberals. To define the right content of the principles and precepts according to which any polity lives represents the challenge in the face of unprecedented religious, ethnic, and social diversity.

Although Akhiezer approaches this problem from an angle unfamiliar to Western political theorists he formulates a particularly intriguing answer. At the centre of his theory stands his observation that Russian state and society have historically been lingering in a state of schism ("raskol"). His definition of "raskol" acquires its definitional pertinence by its opposite, a state of normalcy that Russia has never achieved. This normalcy remains conceptually unexplored, as far as I can see, but acts as a teleological corrective to "raskol". It could be described as a harmonious relationship between state and society where both are based on an identical worldview (or *Weltanschauung*). Such a concurrence of worldviews, however, according to Akhiezer, has never existed in Russia after the country embarked on the path of modernisation.[11] It

oscillates instead between conflicting and often diametrically opposed visions of a good society, traditional and liberal. The outer ends of the spectrum of societal concepts represent forms of life, or in the lingua of Western political theory, conceptions of the good or concepts of happiness.

Akhiezer terms them "syncretistic" and "liberal": the former relates to the historical period untouched by modernisation whereas the latter would refer to a mode of thought most consistent with the modern world. Pre–modern consciousness is undifferentiating, subsuming the object or "the other" under the subject or "the self". In terms of belonging, a pre–modern mind fuses subject and object, or as Akhiezer puts it: the "local activities are taken for the whole". In Russian history this form of consciousness finds it expression in the particular communal form of living called the "veche". This has traditionally been the preferred way of life of Russian society which under the pressure from modernising forces gives way to a bifurcated form of societal consciousness: "sobornost" and authoritarianism. Herein lies the origin of the Russian state and its peculiar detachment from society. While "sobornost" is not much else than the false pretence or a reflection of the desire to live under the conditions of the "veche" that has long gone, the state starts off as an appendage of a society that appears to be able to dispense with the state's functions. This renders the state constantly responsive rather than driving. In this picture there is little room for a political order as an overarching arena of political competition which would reflect society's diverse norms and ideals.

In the Russian case, historically the exigencies of political rule by the Emperor rather than the growing need for organisation by society led to the development of state institutions.[12] Whether this particular historical narrative is true or not, the role attributed here to the state illuminates neatly the (alleged) redundancy of political institutions and their subsequent failure to gain acceptance or anything approximating legitimacy. In order to overcome this "redundancy" the state had to cast itself in the role of integrator so that it was perceived in accord with the dominating worldview as combining the particular parts into a whole.

This had at least two consequences: it resulted in a constant drive of the state (and the political rulers) to mimic the allegedly prevalent social and political attitudes of the population at large (peasantry). At the same time, the state would constantly promote a comprehensive political doctrine that concurred with the population's worldview. Subsequent to the process of modernisation and its diversifying impact on society, this led to a suppression of the existing diversity in social and political outlooks. Consequently, the state became coercive in advancing and imposing a view of political order that less and less corresponded with reality.

The political rulers of Russia found themselves more and more in a no–win situation. To abort reforms and concur with the allegedly widely held beliefs of "sobornost" and community meant to delay the necessary changes to prepare Russia for modernity. To pursue reforms, however, was bound to antagonize that part of the Russian population which clung to a pre–modern conception of Russian society. Either way, the state would lose support in both political camps. In fact all Russian rulers have more or less attempted to create hybrids of political rule which contained both conceptions of life, the pre–modern and the modern/liberal. Soviet Communism was probably the epitome of such a hybridisation of political ideals as it was both communal and modern in aspiration as well as origin.

Western liberal theory and modern conditions of diversity

Akhiezer's account of Russian history under the effect of modernisation explains plausibly the seeming redundancy of state institutions and their overbearing coercive nature. Yet the interesting point for our topic under consideration here lies somewhere else. It is his theory of correspondence or concurrence between societal and state ideals or worldviews which would characterise a "normal" polity, a polity which does not exist under the condition of schism or "raskol".

It might be helpful to firstly describe the aspects in which Western liberal political theory and Akhiezer's thought differ. Political theorists in the West take the religious, ethnic, and wider cultural diversity of their societies as an irreducible fact. This tradition of thought originates in the religious wars of the 16th century and Hobbes has been its earliest and probably most eloquent exponent. Hence the question was how to create a political order that would establish conditions for peaceful and prosperous living for people of all religious denominations. Hobbes emphasized that such a state had to be coercive in nature, but equally insisted that it was obligated to the overall purpose of its creation, the establishment of civil peace. The foundation was laid and ever since Western liberal theorists adhered to these two principles: the diversity of society as a starting point for reasoning and civil peace as the objective of any state order. From these precepts of state formation, liberals have argued that the acknowledgement of societal diversity in the modern world must be inscribed into the political order. Their thought revolved henceforth around the problem of how to do this. We already mentioned above that to rest our hopes on the "neutrality of the state" only begs the question.

How can a modern state accommodate often diametrically opposed forms of living, intolerant religious doctrines, or political outlooks that are outright hostile to tolerance and respect? Coercion alone cannot be the solution since this would mean to aggravate those who oppose the liberal institutions we want to build. A liberal political order must offer more to any single person than what his or her alternative illiberal idea of state order advances. This might be particularly harsh on the conditions of liberal statehood. Yet it is the only way forward unless we want to make liberal political orders the reserve of only that (often minor) part of the population that subscribes to liberal worldviews. The total sum of benefits to be gained in living under a liberal political order must exceed for any single person's calculation the total sum of the benefits gained if he were to live under his ideal illiberal state. In recent years, political theorists in the West have focused much on the concept of reasonableness to define this common ground where the interests of all people coincide and where liberal statehood ought to originate. Not surprisingly, such a definition has proven quite elusive.

Yet the conditions under which we try to theorize liberal statehood are unequivocally set: societal diversity, civil peace as objective of political order, and accommodation of liberal as well as illiberal conceptions of the common good.[13] As a result one particular feature of all coercive states is by definition precluded: the prescription by the state of a particular way of life. The resultant political order must abstain from promoting a particular way of life, be it liberal or otherwise. This is the price liberals have to pay if they aim to establish stable political orders which are inclusive in the widest possible way. Bearing in mind this basic structure of Western political theory, we can take a critical look at Akhiezer's more sociological thought.

Akhiezer conceptualises Russian liberal statehood from an analysis of Russian history. His concept of "raskol" is insightful and immensely helpful when we want to explain the particular deformations of statehood in Russia, its divergence from the norm. Yet it is exactly this norm which poses serious problems. Akhiezer seems to assume that liberal attitudes must prevail in both spheres, the political apparatus and its elite and society for there to be a stable liberal polity.

For Akhiezer the concurrence or concordance of liberalism as a worldview in both state institutions and society is a prerequisite for successfully establishing liberal statehood in Russia. This is exactly where his thought discords with Western political theory. Western political theorists settle for both less and more at the same time. They argue (since Hobbes) that diversity and coexistence of widely differing worldviews is an irreducible feature of the modern world (something that is less than Akhiezer would allow for in his theory), and they try to show that liberal institutions are better suited than illiberal ones to accommodate this diversity (something that includes considerably more than Akhiezer's approach). To hope that one day liberal worldviews will prevail (universally) is to close your eyes to reality. Diversity, so they argue, has been and will continue to characterize our modern world. If anything the world will further diversify as different cultures are brought together and the fact of immigration in Europe brings us more in direct contact with other, often illiberal or intolerant worldviews. In Akhiezer's conception of liberal statehood we would have to pin our hope on the eventually ubiquitous existence of liberal attitudes and ways of life.

Two important observations ensue from this critical juxtaposition of Akhiezer's thought with Western political theory. Firstly, Akhiezer's thought, although critical, possesses a utopian element by premising liberal statehood on the widest possible diffusion of liberal worldviews. By taking this widespread acceptance of liberal values as a precondition for liberal statehood in Russia he puts the benchmark clearly too high. No Western liberal state could satisfy this criterion. In fact, premising liberal statehood as he does renders it inherently illiberal, since the state institutions are urged to honour and respect only those ways of life that are liberal to start with. His conception of statehood removes the incentive of liberal institutions to integrate rather than to exclude and discriminate against other (often illiberal) conceptions of happiness, be they based on exclusive ethnic or religious ideas.

The second point of significance here is that once we eliminate the idea of concurring worldviews in state and society from Akhiezer's critical theory we end up emphasizing the similarities rather than the differences of Russian state history to the West. The liberalisation of Western statehood was in fact a function of its slow and often painful recognition of the underlying diversity and incompatibility of worldviews prevailing in the population. In this, Russia resembles the West rather than diverts from it. Russian political theorists traditionally have pinned their hopes on the eventual prevalence of liberal attitudes amongst the population, which would then allow liberal state institutions to be established. Yet, this is to misinterpret the historical process as it occurred in all liberal countries in the West, and also to disregard modern reality. The challenge is to theorize liberal statehood while most of us subscribe to worldviews which are profoundly illiberal. Hobbes' outlined this argument for us and at this point we will need to continue the debate which he started more than 400 years ago.

Read the rest of the debate:

Alexander Akhiezer
How different are we? (en) (ru)
Akhiezer's answer to Kaehne's article *Russian statehood and Western political theory* looks at the sociocultural rifts that permeate Russian society and the implications for political theory.

Axel Kaehne
Reply to Akhiezer (en) (ru)
In this last part of the Kaehne/Akhiezer debate, Kaehne considers the societal schism between Russia and Europe.

---

1 Margaret Canovan, *Nationhood and Political Theory*, Cheltenham 1996
2 Yegor Gaidar, *Gosudartsvo i Evoliutsia*, Moscow: Evrasiia 1995
3 A.S.Akhiezer and V.V.Il in, *Rossiskaia Gosudarstvennost: istoki, traditsii, perspektivy*, Moscow 1997
4 His argument goes back to Huntington's book *Clash of Civilisations* which enjoys a revival at the moment.
5 Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime*, London: Weidenfels and Nicolson 1974
6 Pipes interpretation of Russia as "patrimonial" rests mostly on this observation.
7 Gaidar, Gosudarstvo, p. 13
8 Cf. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality (Discours sur l'origine de l'inegalite)*, Harmondsworth: Penguin 1984 [1755]
9 Cf. Stephen Holmes, When less State means less Freedom, at www.tol.cz or directly at archive.tol.cz/transitions/whenles1.htm
10 I.e. conceptions of happiness, by which political theorists mean an idea on the general political, social, religious, or ethnic foundations of the community
11 See his seminal historical work Rossiia: *Kritika istoricheskovo opyta*, Tom 1–3, Novosibirsk 1997f.
12 For an insightful comparison between different developments of states and their origins in concepts of community and church see Oleg Kharkhordin: "Civil Society and Orthodox Christianity". First Europe–Asia Lecture, in: *Europe–Asia Studies*. Vol 50 (1998), pp 949–968
13 John Rawls calls them appropriately "reasonable comprehensive doctrines". See his more recent work *Political Liberalism*, New York: Columbia Press 1993

Published 2003–03–05
Original in English
Contribution by Neprikosnovennij Zapas (NZ)
© Neprikosnovennij Zapas
© Eurozine