

Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B.N. Eltsin
Ural Institute of Humanities
History of Philosophy, Philosophical Anthropology, Aesthetics and Theory of
Culture chair

CONVENTION
of Ural Institute of Humanities

International scientific conference
**MANIA/MAGIC OF HISTORY:
THE PAST INSTEAD OF THE PRESENT AND FUTURE**

The conference will be held at the address: prospect Lenina, 51, Yekaterinburg,
22-23 May, 2019

A retro-orientation of the present-day Russian culture is indicated by many analysts. The past in the cultural production of the 2000s-2010s has been crowding out the present and eclipsing the future by justifying the current policy, being a source of nationalistic ambitions and a reference for the future. However, in the view of a number of experts such a state is paradoxically a manifestation of “post-memory” and testifies to capacity deficit of historic consciousness. As the philosopher and sociologist Z. Bauman pointed out repro-utopianism is characteristic of the current cultural state on the whole and, particularly, of the period of “rightist turns” marked by alienating global modernization. Preoccupation of the present-day Russian culture with the past is consistent with this tendency, however, a number of facts complicate it. Firstly, modern “retro-mania” heavily fuels the interest skyrocketing during perestroika in illicit Soviet history. Secondly, opposing interpretations of history countervailing “denigration of the past” and largely restoring discursive models embedded in the Soviet are closely entwined with this tendency. Thirdly, modern “retro-mania” flows logically within the cycle of rewriting of Russian historic narratives as established in the “post-Stalin” epoch.

At the same time, a look at the present-day socio-cultural situation allows for singling out the following features of historic discourses’ functioning in culture which are not peculiar to the previous periods:

- a. Since the mid 2000s rewriting of the official historic narrative has been taken place as established during perestroika. A new narrative is an eclectic combination of contradictory discourses (Soviet, nationalistic, imperial, and conspiratorial, etc.). A carrier of this new narrative is mass culture, in the first place, TV series and the movies, which has a major impact on its form and its content. Along with a historic narrative advanced by mainstream, there exist a number of alternative historic narratives linked with specific cultural spheres and social strata. Together with conceptual alternatives of historic discourse (“leftist”, “intelligentsia-driven”, “Ultra-rightist”, etc.)

- regional historic narratives deserve special attention (see, for instance, modeling of “Ural civilization” in fiction and essay writings of A. Ivanov).
- b. The past of Russia stirs an uneven interest – the huge and still growing number of artistic interpretations of the Soviet period, times of Catherine the Great and the Middle Ages (from Prince of Vladimir to Ivan the Terrible) is combined with comparatively insignificant interest in other epochs (for example, Peter the Great epoch, the 19th century, the Silver Age). The reasons for this “selective affinity” merit special examination.
 - c. Historic discourses have become an important part of everydayness culture (St. George Ribbons, fancy-dress parades and reconstructions), which opens a new field for research: the society of the spectacle (Guy Debord) in modern Russia has a tendency towards fancy-dressing which effectively obscures and even “alleviates” problems and interests of both the past and the present.

The issues to be discussed:

- What is the relationship between “retro-mania” and “post-memory”?
- Retro-mania and “the society of the spectacle”: aesthetics and politics.
- What are the structural characteristics of current historic discourse being formed by mass culture and mainstream?
- What are the alternatives to “mainstream” discourse? Their typology.
- Regional historic narratives – their relationship to mainstream. The Ural historic narrative of the 2000s-2010s.
- Multimedia representation of particular historic epochs in the present-day Russian culture.
- The logic of retro-mania: from nostalgic theories and ideals to practical “construction of the past”.
- Retro-mania and everydayness: zones of penetration, zones of resistance, unpredictable effects.
- How do historic discourses replace discourses of the present and impact the formation of a vision of the future?
- Forms and genres of retro-mania in the present-day Russian culture.
- Matching analysis: retro-mania in the Russian culture and cultures of “near abroad”; former socialistic countries; Western Europe and the USA.

Deadline for applications to participate in the conference - **30 March, 2019**. Applications should be sent to kruglowa@mail.ru. There are internal and in absentia modes of participation. Organizing Committee will inform the applicants about their decision by **10 April 2019**. Application requirements: the title of the paper and the abstract of 2000 characters in Microsoft Word format indicating the author’s name, affiliation and status. Papers are planned to be published in the WOS indexed collection of papers upon peer-reviewed recommendations and in UrFU Bulletin (HAC). Papers of 20 000 characters in Russian and in English (for

English native speakers) should be sent no later than **1 June, 2019**. The results of paper selection will be announced till **15 June**. Paper submission requirements will be specified upon completion of application selection.

The conference Organizing Committee: Zaks L.A., doctor in Philosophy, Lipovetsky M.N., doctor in Philosophy (Colorado, US), Kruglova T.A., doctor in Philosophy, Nemchenko L.M., candidate of Philosophy, Yakimov A., post-graduate.