

## **Preface by the Editor-in-Chief**

On November 14, 2024, the I International Scientific Conference titled “Philosophical Reflection on Historiographical and Prospective Tasks of Contemporary Public Law” was held in Ekaterinburg at the venue of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The event was organized by the Institute of Philosophy and Law of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Institute of State and Law of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

This conference was part of the first year of a scientific project (grant) entitled “Creating a Russian Historiographical Model of Political and Legal Knowledge and Its Application for Developing Prospective Means to Counteract Ideological Distortions of Russia's Civilizational Development,” which is being implemented at the Institute of State and Law of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The issues addressed in this conference are particularly relevant at the present stage of the development of the Russian state. This relates to the strengthening of Russia's scientific and cultural sovereignty in a changing global landscape. Many social theories that have been uncritically borrowed from abroad have turned out to be distorted ideological mirrors that require critical reevaluation or complete dismissal. A number of intellectual illusions and utopias from the post-Soviet period have been dispelled, amplifying the demand for a return to domestic scientific achievements, history, culture, and authentic values that have been overshadowed by superficial ideological constructs.

Changes in the requirements for the quality and originality of political and legal knowledge necessitate a reevaluation of both existing theories and practices of public law, legal philosophy, and political theory, as well as the theoretical aspects rooted in outdated and ideologically loaded models. Historiographical issues have become the subject of vivid academic analysis, which presupposes the renewal of the historical and conceptual representation of contemporary Russian society regarding itself.

Within the framework of the conference, the following questions and areas of focus were discussed:

- Historiographical challenges related to the application of the civilizational approach in political and legal research;
- Models of reconstructing political and legal knowledge and methods for their analysis;
- Mechanisms of political and legal regulation of values and institutions ensuring the effective reproduction and social cohesion of the Russian nation;
- Characteristics and contradictions in the formation of a civic narrative within the public sphere;
- The development of Russian political and legal culture;
- Ideological distortions in existing historiographical models and methods for safeguarding historical truth.

The immediate goal of this conference was to develop a theoretical and methodological framework for improving the civic narrative in Russia, which is associated with the formation of a consolidating identity and the historical and cultural unity of a sovereign nation.

More than 70 researchers from various research organizations and higher education institutions participated in the conference, including the Institute of State and Law of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Philosophy and Law of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Ural State Law University, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, the Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (Minsk), the Udmurt Branch of the Institute of Philosophy and Law of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Fudan University (Shanghai), and others.

Active participation in the conference was taken by scholars from the Republic of Belarus (A. Yu. Dudchik – the Deputy Director for Research at the Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Candidate of Philosophy, Associate Professor) and the People's Republic of China (a delegation of two researches led by Scientific director of the School of Marxism, Doctor of Philosophy, Professor Gu Lishuan from Fudan University).

The conference was held in the format of three plenary sessions, each moderated by a different facilitator. The first session, in addition to scientific presentations, included ceremonial events to commemorate the centenary of Sergei S. Alekseev – the outstanding Russian legal scholar, Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. During the events, a book was presented: S.S. Alekseev. *The Rise of Law: (To Mark the Centenary of His Birth)* / project supervisor A.N. Savenkov; edited and compiled by M.F. Kazantsev and V.N. Rudenko; authors of the introductory article P.V. Krasheninnikov. – Moscow: Institute of State and Law of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 2024. – 800 pages. – (Scientific project “Russian Academy of Sciences: Outstanding Scholars in Law. 20<sup>th</sup> Century”).

Following this, the first ceremonial presentation of a commemorative medal and badge took place, established by the Institute of Philosophy and Law, Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences in honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sergei S. Alekseev. S. Alekseev served as the founding director of this institute in 1988. The laureates of the commemorative medal included scholars, who were students of Sergei S. Alekseev himself. The medal and badge were also presented to the S.S. Alekseev Museum “Ascent to Law,” the Ural State Law University named after V.F. Yakovlev, and the Ural Branch of the S.S. Alekseev Research Center for Private Law under the President of the Russian Federation.

The plenary sessions were dedicated to the following topics:

- “The Values of Legal Philosophy: Contexts of Reinterpretation”

- “Historiography and Perspectives on the Development of Contemporary Public Law”

- “Interdisciplinary Integration of Contemporary Public Law: Problems and Solutions.”

An important part of the conference was the youth seminar “Historiographical Issues in Light of the Civilizational Approach.” Around 30 young researchers from academic institutes and universities participated in the seminar. The reports that examined the methods and principles of legislative regulation of traditional values and the protection of historical truth generated the most interest and discussions.

The intensive schedule of the conference in a plenary format was fully justified, as all speakers presented their reports to the other participants. This allowed for a comprehensive examination of the problems raised in the reports and the substantiation of research positions on the topics addressed at the conference.

The following issues generated the most interest during the discussions:

- Exploring the main contributions of the prominent Russian legal scholar Sergei S. Alekseev to legal philosophy, civil law, and legal theory;

- Reconsidering the philosophy of state by integrating insights from both Russian and international scholars in understanding the essence and purpose of the state;

- Establishing the concept of *politics of memory* within Russia's legal system, as reflected in a significant number of strategic planning documents;

- Investigating the connections between Modernity and Tradition, Russia and the West, and how traditional and modern values co-exist in contemporary Russian society;

- Introducing innovative approaches to the study of legal history by looking at how different disciplines interact;

- Examining how the Western strategic narrative has affected Russian statehood and exploring ways to address this challenge;

– Highlighting the often-overlooked contributions of Russian state studies in shaping the concepts of *supreme authority* and *sovereignty*.

An overview of existing historiographical approaches to political and legal thought in both Russian and Western literature has revealed that the established structure and content of political and legal knowledge do not align with the needs of contemporary Russia and do not always meet the criteria of scientific validity. The conference substantiated the proper selection of scientific issues for discussion. In the Russian Federation, the renewal of theoretical and methodological foundations of the social sciences and the counteraction to external destructive ideological influences have become subjects of increasingly vigorous academic discourse.

The conference held in Ekaterinburg has laid an important intellectual groundwork for further ensuring the effective transformation of Russian social knowledge in the context of the existential challenges facing contemporary Russia amid both external and internal pressures. The presentations at the conference documented a number of significant outcomes concerning the feasibility of creating a verified system of political and legal knowledge, as well as the cultural specificity involved in the formation of a common civic narrative within the public sphere in Russia.

As a result of the conference proceedings, the presented collection includes the resolution of the First International Scientific Conference “Philosophical Reflection on Historiographical and Prospective Tasks of Contemporary Public Law,” which encompasses scientific and practical proposals as well as expert recommendations for specialists, as well as for federal, state, and municipal legislative and executive authorities, and concerned institutions and organizations.

With respect to all authors and readers,  
Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences

**V.N. Rudenko**