

Twenty-three years after the disappearance of the Soviet Union, the words and concepts with which to capture the reality of contemporary Russia have evolved. Within the interpretative framework of temporality, in other words a plural conception of human temporalities as opposed to an objectified concept of uniform and continuous time, various interpretations of the changes undergone compete with one another: if the notion of a revolutionary change has never caught on, approaches focusing on “the transition” have been rapidly superseded by other modes of apprehension using the concepts of path dependency, of transformations and mutations that go far beyond that of a simple change of regime, while producing novel configurations whose analysis requires the elaboration of the tools now being thought out. Other studies have brought to the fore the way different temporalities (economic time versus political time and societal time) overlap, further complexifying the analysis of these transformations.

How then are these evolutions and mutations represented? Which aspects of these representations relate to rupture, which to continuity?

Individual and collective temporalities, as well as economic, political and societal temporalities, need to be examined in their specificity, their own articulations and tensions. Ruptures and turning points need to be studied with particular care as they far from systematically correspond to what common sense considers to be key events. Regarding continuity, it can be apprehended through a return to Russian and Soviet history, in particular to the way this history is called upon as a source of models, contradictions or references. History thus inspires a reflexion on changes as they have been lived but also on the practices put in place within the framework of public or institutional policies.

History as it is told, or its stories, whether individual or collective, brings to light these ruptures and/or continuities. History as a formalization of collective memory is a hermeneutic activity which, in its more extreme manifestations, can go from interpretation to reinterpretation and falsification. Collective memory also implies the constitution of a collective patrimony, an institution today interpreted as a form of congealing. Parallel to the processes proper to the constitution of a collective memory, we need to consider those enabling the construction of individual memories, such as diaries or testimonies. This is what A. Yurchak suggests when he uses different types of sources and different disciplines to show, in *Everything was forever, until it was no more*, both the degree to which the late Soviet regime seemed eternal and that to which its end was expected and predictable. Personal writings and life recollections as sources of data for the social sciences regarding the changes that have affected the Russian world can also be considered as an axis of study to understand the role played by the past and its interpretation in the way the present and the future are being written. Furthermore, the study of everyday life could open onto an anthropological approach to the issue of the temporalities of the Russian world.

This history is both that of the Russian Empire before 1917 and that of the Soviet Union. In accounts for the “general public” of the changes occurring in contemporary Russia, there are discourses which highlight the return of sovietism, or the issue of empire – and conclude hastily with the idea that Russia lives on with its own forms of

continuity, among others that of a strong central power. The analysis of discourses, representations and practices should enable the deciphering of the use of references to cycles within the context of the building of another system, of a reconfiguration, a new combination, which combines the old elements with the necessarily new changes. Regarding the category of representation, it would also be interesting to study the role of myths, be they those believed in by Russians in Russia, or those the West builds itself about Russia. Myth has a founding function, one of identification but also of explanation, and has a long time horizon: how does it get written and what influence does it have on the building of the new Russian configurations? The very notion of myth needs examining anyway: creating a mythical configuration is certainly an ambition of those who wield power, but can political marketing alone give rise to such a configuration?

In the short term, one of the categories of time is that of rhythm and tempo: how does the power elite give Russian society its tempo? And how does the tempo thus imparted to short term action combine with the feeling, given by Vladimir Putin to Russian society, that long-term the country is heading for recovery, or even has already recovered, given Russia's return to the fore in international matters for example (the management of the Ukrainian crisis could be an interesting case study from that point of view)? These considerations lead to another issue, that of the tempo Russia is allegedly imposing in the world by proceeding with changes contributing to the elaboration of a new world order, thus introducing uncertainties susceptible of rendering the temporalities of the post-Cold War era obsolete.

The tempo given by the power elite originates in internal politics in their institutional form, that is in the reforms voted then implemented during Putin's presidency, a process whose calendar timing and scheduling is probably worth analysing. But it is also linked to the political leadership of Putin the man, with its vertical axis of power, which in return engenders resistance and revolt, the emergence of opposition or on the contrary movements supporting and defending the present balance of power. What can be observed regarding the use of social and networking media in the renewing or developing of modes of political mobilisation and how rare they reconfiguring political temporalities?

Place can also be given to the temporalities of crisis: confronted with critical issues, the power elite is either confrontational (the institutional crisis of October 1993 is an example) or caught up in a logic of appeasement.

In a general way, characterising the different temporalities at work in the discourses around contemporary Russia is a way of thinking about the temporalities generally associated with the regimes known as *democratic*, which account for most of Western societies, and show how they differ from other regimes. One can imagine taking a look at for example the temporalities proper to voting and electoral campaigns as well as to the alternation of power. The notion of temporality could also be explored in the short and the long term. It covers the relationship to time in all its diversity: social time and sociability in everyday life, the relationship to culture and that to politics.

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Proposals

Papers will be selected on the basis of proposals (maximum length 5000 characters), which need to reach the volume's editors, Natalia Leclerc (natalialeclerc@gmail.com) and Anne Le Huérou (anne.lehuerou@free.fr), as well as the journal's administrative secretary (temporalites@revues.org) by December 15 2014.

Schedule and deadlines

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Deadline for final versions: October 15 2015

Publication: December 2015

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