



## EDITORIAL

### Editor's Note

The current issue of *Changing Societies & Personalities* continues discussion on values in various contexts, in particular, on the values of freedom, power, and national identity. Ivan Strenski in the article *What Do Religious Corporations Owe for Burdening Individual Civil Rights* compares two terms: individual “religious freedom” and corporate “freedom of religion”; he argues that they are often confused with one another. Strenski examines the relationship between corporate religious bodies and the state and stresses the craven collapse in religious resistance to Leviathan, which is a very regrettable circumstance in modern political and religious history. In addition, religion is not always really seeking freedom from the state control. Strenski emphasizes that in the West it has become commonplace to identify religious freedom with the right to believe whatever one chooses; however, the two concepts under consideration in the article are quite different from each other. The true measure of the depth of this difference can be assessed by the frequency, with which the rights of individual religious freedom conflict with the rights of corporate religious institutions. To reinforce his conclusions, Strenski cites relevant historical and contemporary examples.

In the article *Weber's Nationalism vs. Weberian Methodological Individualism: Implications for Contemporary Social Theory*, Marharyta Fabrykant notes that “there is no comprehensive theory of nationalism unlike other key concepts, such as democracy, political culture, or even society itself, but a multitude of theoretical approaches dedicated to specific aspects of the issue, primarily to the origins of nations and nationalism”. Considering Max Weber’s understanding of nationalism is especially important in the light of continuing debates on the nature of his concept. Fabrykant analyzes the scholarly discussion on the topic whether Weber himself was a nationalist, and underlines that there is a considerable variety of opinions about Weber’s nationalism and its historical context. She compares the ideas of sociological classics – Simmel, Durkheim, and Sombart – with Weber’s ideas and concludes that he “does not attempt to tie the emergence of nations to a specific

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historical period with its specific macrolevel context. Instead he relies upon what he believes to be universals of human nature – the tendency to produce personal and emotionally charged meanings for the initially purely pragmatic events, as long as the latter are not universally shared”. At the same time, Fabrykant argues that there is a significant difference between Weber’s views on nationalism in his earlier and mature texts.

Nelly A. Romanovich in the article *Dichotomy of the Basic Aspects of the Image of Power in Russia: Traditional and Modern Models* writes that there is the system of perceptions about power within a given society, which includes both basic (concept, functions, form, duties, etc.), and contextual (expectation of specific socio-political actions from a particular government) aspects. She argues that the historical developmental paths of Eastern and Western cultures have led to differences in the system of power relations. These differences were manifested in the political cultures of Western countries and Russia, and affected the people’s attitude towards the concept of power. As a result, the image of power has obtained its own sociocultural specifics in each society. Romanovich compares traditional and modern models of power and argues that characteristics of the former are based on a special loyalty of people to their sovereigns; this model is traditional for Russia since it originated and was formed along with the birth and foundation of the country where “power” is something, to which one needs to serve and should serve. In Russia, people did not endow the autocrat with authority, but rather recognized his/her authority. In its turn, the modern model of the image of power suggests the opposite direction of serving: “The highest representative elected by the people serves the people, and never vice versa. Therefore, the attitude towards the authorities and its supreme representative is calm, without any admixture of mysticism”. Romanovich considers personification, which includes a set of logical consequences such as autocracy, centralization and hierarchy, as the main characteristic of the Russian model of the image of power. She concludes that the modern model of the image of power conflicts with the original Russian model, and notes that in spite of proclaiming the modern model in the current Russian Constitution, the traditional model still dominates public opinion.

In the ESSAY section, Olga Potap’s *Power of Memory (In Commemoration of Elie Wiesel, 1928–2016)* is published. The essay is dedicated to Elie Wiesel’s ninety-year-old birthday anniversary, and since this publication coincides with the third anniversary of his death, the article aims to commemorate him. Olga Potap had a privilege to be a student of Elie Wiesel from 2003–2005; she describes his teaching carrier at different universities of the USA, outlines the themes of Wiesel’s lectures and seminars, and depicts the method of his teaching.

The current issue of CS&P includes two book reviews. The first one is on Michael Ignatieff’s *The Ordinary Virtues: Moral Order in a Divided World* (Harvard University Press, 2017). In the review, I’ve focused on the analysis of ordinary virtues against moral universalism. The second review is on Michael Goodhart’s *Injustice: Political Theory for the Real World* (Oxford University Press, 2018) written by Daniil Kokin. The reviewer notes that the book “raises a serious problem of contemporary

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political theory by showing its one-sided character and inability to address the real-world political issues”.

Discussions on the topics raised in the current issue will be continued in the subsequent issues of our journal, and new themes will be introduced. We welcome suggestions for thematic issues, debate sections, book reviews and other formats from readers and prospective authors, and invite them to send us their reflections and ideas!

For more information, please visit the journal web-site: <https://changing-sp.com/>

*Elena A. Stepanova,  
Editor-in-Chief*