

# Historical Past and Contemporary Propaganda in the Global Context

June 7–8, 2024

Presented by

Gagarin Center at Bard College  
Smolny Beyond Borders Initiative at Bard College Berlin  
Center for Comparative Research on Democracy  
at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin  
Jacob-und-Wilhelm-Grimm-Zentrum  
Geschwister-Scholl-Straße 1/3  
10117 Berlin

Smolny  
Beyond Borders



Gagarin Center



**Smolny Beyond Borders** is a liberal arts initiative that continues and builds upon the legacy of Smolny College (formerly a joint program of St. Petersburg State University and Bard College), the longest-running dual degree program between any Russian and American institution. It was established in November 2022 by a group of former Smolny College faculty with the support of Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, and Bard College Berlin (BCB). For nearly a quarter of a century, Smolny College was unprecedented in its support of the liberal arts community in Russia. With Putin's authoritarian regime targeting progressive educational institutions, many Russian intellectuals, including former Smolny faculty members and students, have been forced to leave Russia. **The Gagarin Center for the Study of Civil Society and Human Rights** at Bard College allows Russian scholars to continue to pursue research and educational activities focused on contemporary social, economic, and human rights issues. The Center was formerly part of Smolny College. The Center now partners with Smolny Beyond Borders, an educational initiative for faculty and students who left Russia and the surrounding region due to the ongoing invasion of Ukraine and risk of political persecution. Supported by the Andrew Gagarin Trust, the Center continues to support Smolny BB faculty research on vital issues and public programming. For more information visit: <https://www.smolny.org>

**Bard College Berlin** is an accredited German-American university that offers intensive, transdisciplinary education in the humanities and social sciences. The student body is highly international and diverse in terms of geography, culture, class, and economic background and meets with faculty in small seminars taught in English. An emphasis on critical thinking, intellectual ambition, creativity, and the connection between life in and outside the classroom is a fundamental feature. Qualifying students can earn both an American and a German BA degree. For more information visit: <https://www.berlin.bard.edu>

**The Center for Comparative Research on Democracy (CCRD)** is a research center at the Department of Social Sciences, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. The Center is dedicated to promoting a deeper and more nuanced understanding of democracy by bringing together scholars from a wide range of disciplines, including political science, sociology, philosophy, and law, to study the complex and multifaceted nature of democracy. The Center's research activities include organizing workshops and conferences, fostering international collaborations, and supporting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. CCRD also engages policy makers and the broader public through its outreach activities, such as public lectures, book events, roundtable discussions. It provides opportunities and platforms for scholars at risk and facilitates the exchange of ideas on academic freedom. It also creates a hub for comparative research on issues of (de-)democratization in Europe and beyond. For more information visit: <https://ccrd-berlin.de/>

**The U.S. Russia Foundation (USRF)** is an American non-profit organization founded in 2008 that aims to strengthen relations between the United States and Russia and to promote the development of the private sector in the Russian Federation. The Foundation is the legacy organization of the U.S. Russia Investment Fund (TUSRIF), an organization founded by the U.S. Government under the Support for Eastern European Democracy Act of 1989 and the Freedom Support Act of 1992. USRF works in partnership with the U.S. Government through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). USRF makes grants in three main lanes, Media & Free Enterprise, Rule of Law, and Civil Society & Expertise. For more information visit: <https://www.usrf.us>

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whose generous support made this conference possible.

# Friday, June 7, 2024

8:45 am                      **Coffee**

9:00 – 9:15 am              **Welcome**

- Silvia von Steinsdorff, CCRD/Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
- Philip Fedchin, Smolny Beyond Borders/Gagarin Center/Bard College Berlin
- Jonathan Becker, Bard College
- Kerry Bystrom, Bard College Berlin
- Stefan Karsch, International Department/Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

9:15 – 10:45 am              **Panel 1: (Re)invention of Temporality**

Moderator: Artemy Magun, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center

- Ilya Kalinin, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/ Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin  
*History as Politics: Mobilization of the Past*
- Elad Magomedov, Center for Phenomenology and Continental Philosophy, KU Leuven  
*Propaganda as Phantasmaticization of Temporality*
- Victor Apyrshchenko, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center  
*History as Propaganda: 19th Century National Projects in Scotland, Catalonia and Don Cossack Region*
- Dmitrii Dubrovskii, Charles University; Irina Rebrova, ZfA TU Berlin  
*(Re)invention of the "Genocide of the Soviet People": Legal Practice and Political Context in Modern Russia*

10:45 – 11:00 am              **Coffee Break**

11:00 – 12:15 pm              **Panel 2: Resistance and (Contr)propaganda**

Moderator: Danila Raskov, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/ University of Helsinki

- Rosario Forlenza, Luiss; Bjørn Thomassen, Roskilde University  
*Propaganda as a Vehicle of Political Transition. The Risorgimento and the Politics of Memory in Italy from Fascism to Post-Fascism, 1932-1961*
- Masha Godovannaya, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center  
*The Filmmaker as Partisan: Found-Footage Film as a Form of Aesthetic Resistance and Affective Cinematic Labor*
- Mikhail Allakhverdov, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/ Yerevan State University  
*Dynamic Memory Processes: Unraveling Propaganda's Influence and Crafting Adaptive Counter Strategies*

12:15 – 1:15 pm                **Lunch**

1:15 – 2:30 pm                **Panel 3: Propaganda in a Coups**

Moderator: Claudia-Y. Matthes, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

- Gülçin Coşkun, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin; Ertuğ Tombuş, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin  
*Constituting the Regime: The July 15 Coup Attempt and Political Legitimization in Turkey*
- Peter Rutland, Wesleyan University  
*Inside the Wagnerverse*

- Denis Skopin, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center
- *In Front of the Wagner Center in St. Petersburg, Next Day after Prigozhin's Assassination (a visual anthropology essay)*

**2:30 – 4:00 pm**

**Panel 4: Symbols and Languages of Propaganda**

Moderator: Silvia von Steinsdorff, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

- Polina Vishnevskaya, Central European University  
*National Symbols and Propaganda: Marianne and Germania in the French Patriotic Illustrated Press during WWI*
- Domenico Scagliusi, Sorbonne University  
*Performing the Duty of Memory: Five Time Travel Narratives of the Great Patriotic War*
- Larissa Muraveva, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center  
*Russian Autofiction and Collective Trauma*
- Nikolai (Kolya) Nakhshunov, independent scholar  
*From „Gayropa“ to „Rainbow Reich“: A Critical Phenomenology of Anti-Gay Propaganda in Russia*

**4:15 – 5:15 pm**

**Project presentation: Russian Independent Media Archive and the Task of Resistance to Media Censorship in Russia**

Ilya Venyavkin, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/ RIMA\*

## Saturday, June 8, 2024

**8:45 am**

**Coffee**

**9:00 – 10:30 am**

**Panel 5: Education and Propaganda**

Moderator: Jonathan Becker, Bard College

- Philip Fedchin, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/ Bard College Berlin  
*Liberal Arts Education in Russia: Individual Plan of Study and its Enemies*
- Ekaterina Rozova, Sorbonne University/ Independent Institute of Philosophy (Paris)  
*History of Russian Philosophy as an Academic Discipline: Instrumentalisation of the Course in Russian Propaganda*
- Vera Shengeliya, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center  
*Disability Lab Initiative: Fefelov List as a Tool to Empower a Community of Activists*
- Andrei Rodin, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center  
*Political Propaganda in Science and Mathematics Education: Some Historical Examples and Recent Practices*

**10:30 – 10:45 am**

**Coffee Break**

**10:45 – 12:15 pm**

**Panel 6: Art and Propaganda**

Moderator: Danila Raskov, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/ University of Helsinki

- Natalia Fedorova, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/ University Paris 8  
*Art as Propaganda*

- Oleg Minin, Bard College  
*Satirical Laughter and Repressive Regimes: Russian Émigré Cartoons of Early Soviet Symbols of Power, Memory and Commemoration*
- Alexey Gusev, University of Münster  
*The Leningrad Rock Club: A Tale of Historical Propaganda and Soviet Rock Music*
- Maria Chernysheva, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center  
*"Saving Princess Tarakanova": When is the Popularization of History not Propaganda?*

**12:15 – 1:45 pm**

**Panel 7: Propagandistic Mobilisations**

Moderator: Gülçin Coşkun, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

- Ilya Venyavkin, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/ RIMA\*  
*Aleksandr Dugin and Aleksandr Prokhanov as Ideological Entrepreneurs*
- Sophia Winkler, Centre for East European and international Studies (ZOiS)  
*Belonging Between Two Worlds? Social Media and Young Russians' Identity Abroad*
- Olga Logunova, King's College London; Ilya Kiriya, University of Grenoble  
*Polarisation of Russian Online Public Sphere Around Stalin's Figure: Evidence from Wartime*
- Aleksei Gilev, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/ University of Helsinki  
*Foundations of Political Conformism in Nowadays Russian Society*

**1:45 – 3:00 pm**

**Lunch**

**3:00 – 4:15 pm**

**Panel 8: Digital Media and Propaganda**

Moderator: Artemy Magun, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center

- Dmitriy Lebedev, Freie University  
*Russian Propaganda and Media: from the Logic of Market to the Logic of Cruelty*
- Natalia Artemenko, Institute of Humanistic and Existential Psychology  
*The Phenomenon of "Shitstorm" and "Hate Speech" in the Social Media Space: What Drives People to Participate in Online Firestorms?*
- Olena Pavlova, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin  
*Teaching and Researching the Memes of War in Ukraine as a Form of the Contemporary Propaganda*

**5:00 – 6:30 pm**

**Key-note Talk**

Moderator: Ilya Kalinin, Smolny Beyond Borders/ Gagarin Center/  
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

- Alexander Etkind, Central European University  
*Russia's Casus Belli: Memory Politics or Political Propaganda?*

\* *The Russian Independent Media Archive project (RIMA) is a joint initiative of PEN America and The Gagarin Center at Bard College, made in collaboration with Internet Archive (Wayback Machine). RIMA launched in April 2023.*

For more information, please visit [smolny.org](https://smolny.org).  
If you have any questions, please email [gagarincenter@smolny.org](mailto:gagarincenter@smolny.org).