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The “Cancel Culture” in the Context of Civilizational Transfers: Searching for the “Alien” Past

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Abstract. The “cancel culture” becomes a mechanism for forming civilizational identity. Within the framework of the constructivist approach, civilizational communities are viewed as ways of responding to the formation of national narratives that attempt to combine cultural diversity and relative political unity in the context of competition between modernist projects. Key axes of conflict have been identified: postcolonialism versus realism, global versus particular, secular versus religious. A shift towards moderately isolationist positions in modernity projects is noted, given the lack of resources to impose their civilizational projections as universal. The process of using the mechanisms of “cancel culture” is described, not only to securitize one’s civilizational identity, but also to construct an alternative project of modernity. The mechanism of “double construction” of civilizational identity through “cancel culture” is observed: the creation not only of the image of the “Other”, but also of its historical projection, which acts as the antithesis of the civilizational past. However, by creating the “Other”, the subject initiating the “cancellation” also transforms its own identity under the influence of the image it has created. Due to the lack of communication between competing projects, internal tensions intensify, and the conflict becomes symbolically significant as it begins to touch upon the historical foundations of a particular civilizational community.

Keywords: civilization, transfer, memory, oblivion, politics of memory, multiple modernities, cancel culture

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«Культура отмены» в условиях цивилизационных трансферов: поиски «чужого» прошлого

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Аннотация. «Культура отмены» все чаще выступает в качестве механизма формирования цивилизационной идентичности. В рамках конструктивистского подхода цивилизационные сообщества рассматриваются как способы реакции на формирование национальных нарративов, пытающиеся совместить культурное разнообразие и относительное политическое единство в условиях конкуренции модернистских проектов. В исследовании были выделены ключевые оси конфликтов: постколониализм против реализма, глобальное против партикулярного, секулярное против религиозного. Отмечается переход к умеренно-изоляционистским позициям проектов модерности ввиду отсутствия ресурсов для навязывания своих цивилизационных проекций в качестве всеобщих. Описывается процесс использования механизмов «культуры отмены» не только для секьюритизации своей цивилизационной идентичности, но и для конструирования альтернативного проекта модерности. Фиксируется механизм «двойного конструирования» цивилизационной идентичности с помощью «культуры отмены»: создание не только образа «Другого», но и его исторической проекции, которая выступает в качестве антипода цивилизационного прошлого. Но, создавая «Другого», сам субъект инициации «отмены» также трансформирует свою идентичность под влиянием им же созданного образа. Из-за дефицита коммуникации между конкурирующими проектами происходит усиление внутреннего напряжения, а конфликт становится символически значимым, поскольку начинает затрагивать вопрос об исторических основаниях конкретного цивилизационного сообщества.

Ключевые слова: цивилизация, трансфер, память, забвение, историческая политика, множественные модерности, культура отмены

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Introduction

Despite the obvious rejection of the idea of the “end of history” — even Francis Fukuyama revised his famous thesis — the idea of linear modernization as the only way of development remains extremely stable. Competing ways of understanding and describing the world continue to occupy a rather peripheral position, as they are poorly represented both in the academic field and in the mass consciousness, which is still dominated by Western-centric teleology. Such a model represents any challenge to the hegemonic view of the world as a perverse action that must be destroyed on both a physical and symbolic level.

One of the alternatives is the civilizational paradigm, which makes it possible to analyze the complex plurality of the modern world without resorting to the apology of a single meta-narrative. Today, civilizational theory is gradually moving beyond the academic community and becoming a category of practical politics. Suffice it to say that in the Foreign Policy Concept of March 31, 2023, Russia is represented as an original “country-civilization”. The most influential political leaders of the world also appeal to the concept of “civilization”. For example, in 2001, the President of Iran, S.M. Khatami organized the movement for dialogue among civilizations [Naumov, Afanasyeva 2024], the UN General Assembly declared 2001 the “Year of Dialogue among Civilizations under the auspices of the United Nations”¹, and in 2025, Xi Jinping calls for dialogue and cooperation among civilizations.²

Therefore, in contrast to the common idea of normativity, it is the theory of local civilizations that is becoming increasingly popular today. Previously, the universalist view of civilization or civility dominated, but today there is an alternative trend, when the countries of the global South appeal to their “unique” path of development. Moreover, we are currently witnessing a process of deconstruction of the “collective West” category, which leads to social divisions and a general fragmentation of the political and ideological landscape.

The observed trends bring to the forefront the task of analyzing how discourse about civilization functions as an idea. We proceed from the thesis that civilization acts as a broad supranational identity. This assertion does not dispute the existence of ontological or metaphysical features of individual civilizations; such questions

¹ Statement by the Secretary-General at the plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the agenda item “Year of Dialogue among Civilizations under the United Nations auspices”. *General Secretary*. Retrieved July 25, 2025, from https://www.un.org/ru/sg/annan_messages/2001/a56pv42.shtml

² Xi Jinping congratulated participants of the ministerial meeting of the Global Dialogue among Civilizations (July 10, 2025). *RGRU*. Retrieved July 25, 2025, from <https://rg.ru/2025/07/10/si-czinpin-pozdravil-uchastnikov-ministerskoj-vstrechi-globalnogo-dialoga-mezhdu-civilizaciami.html>

are not the subject of our research. In this paper, we will analyze how the memory of a community that claims the status of a civilization is constructed and “cancelled”. The focus on the problem of memory is due to the fact that historical projection serves as a fundamental element in the legitimization of so-called “imagined communities”.

Research Methodology

Despite the obvious popularity of the civilizational paradigm for both scientists and politicians, it is necessary to highlight a number of critical points. As M.M. Mchedlova notes, the concept of “civilization”, due to its popularity and universal applicability, has become “a victim of its success” [Mchedlova 2017, 149]. This is largely due to the fact that overly frequent appeals to the notion of “civilization” have led to semantic saturation, whereby “civilization” comes to denote virtually anything, resulting in a certain degree of conceptual confusion. For example, the popularity of one of the most cited concepts of “clash of civilizations”, formulated by S. Huntington, is determined by the following features: firstly, it is an extremely simple theory, which allows it to be reproduced both in academic and mass discourses; secondly, its concept allows one to substantiate the advantages of Western civilization; thirdly, It allows us to argue for a “special path” of development that legitimizes a particular policy to the detriment of a pluralistic one [Velizhev 2019, 147]. In fact, the proliferation of such simplified schemes has led to the politicization of the concept to the detriment of scientific rigor.

An important problem in the implementation of the civilizational paradigm in politics is that a single language has not yet been developed to describe international relations from the perspective of a civilizational approach. If States have clear borders, international institutions of representation, such as the United Nations, are in most cases recognized by other States, and so on, then civilizations do not have formal criteria. As K. Telin notes, this leads to the fact that the alternative vocabularies of the “nation-state” and the “state-nation” are characterized precisely by a greater degree of elaboration, diffusion, and conceptual detail [Telin 2023, 73].

It is also necessary to note the criticism of the civilizational paradigm from the perspective of constructivism. For example, D.E. Letnyakov, in his critique of the theory, identifies the following key issues: first, the civilizational approach has not overcome its “metaphorical imprecision”; second, this paradigm fails to take into account the anti-essentialist turn in scholarship. According to the above criticism, civilization appears primarily as an ideological construct [Letnyakov 2024], and

the only adequate research position is to study the discursive nature of this concept [Letnyakov 2021].

Considering these remarks, it is impossible to agree with the final conclusions. Firstly, the concepts themselves in the humanities are not neutral, as they include a certain element of political practice. For example, concepts such as “class” or “nation” can be distinguished, which are clearly value-laden [Braslavsky, Galindabayeva, Kozlovsky 2021: 13]. Secondly, such a statement of the problem, noting the historicity of the current state of the West, still represents one path as the only normal one. This actually allows us to monopolize “modernity” within the framework of a single political project. Thirdly, the adoption of constructivist methodology should not lead to the consideration of “constructs” as exclusively discourses that have little impact on anything. In practice, constructivism is compelled to take into account a whole range of factors that define the limits of permissible construction; in turn, its influence on the behavior of individual actors and social communities makes it possible to speak of the “realism” and “materiality” of constructed objects [Latour 2010].

In our view, an effective approach that largely resolves the contradictions of the classical civilizational paradigm is the theory of multiple modernities formulated by Shmuel Eisenstadt. Despite criticism of the excessive emphasis on cultural factors, it was his concept that made the greatest contribution to the formation of a relational approach to the study of civilizations [Maslovskiy 2015]. S. Eisenstadt criticized the classical theory of modernization, which presented the Western path of development as optimal. He argued that modernization does not act as a linear process of forming a universal model. It is transformed in different cultural contexts according to the needs of specific societies [Eisenstadt 2000]. In fact, he substantiated the thesis of the irreducibility of modernity to a single foundation. Such modernities are formed around the recreation of a multitude of cultural programs, each of which, to one degree or another, strives to present itself as universal. At the same time, each of the programs individually adheres to different views on what makes society modern. In this context, Western modernity appears as one of them, although alternative models may consider Western experience as the basic one.

It should be noted that modernity itself is not a closed and impenetrable structure. Whereas the classical approach of S. Eisenstadt posits the existence of multiple modernities that are unique to particular regions, the contemporary approach suggests that multiple modernities do not constitute a single, coherent, and ordered whole [David-Fox 2016]. As G. Therborn notes, although modernity itself encompasses competing and opposing narratives, they do not merely coexist and challenge one another, but are also intertwined [Therborn 2003]. Such an approach is much more closely aligned with constructivist methodology,

as it assumes that these projects of modernity intertwine, mix, and generate hybrids and alternative networks.

Each of the alternative models of modernity is fighting for a position of hegemony in the context of cultural transfers or the crisis of a single universalist understanding of modernity [Ionov 2021, 51–54]. Projects of modernity generate specific political projects, understood as normative repertoires of action aimed at realizing an ideologically committed vision of social reality through the imposition of a particular interpretation and the marginalization of alternative ways of understanding the world. Such large-scale projects compete with one another, generating a field of political, ideological, and identity conflicts, while within a single state groups oriented toward different civilizational models may coexist.

According to this position, civilization in discourse appears as an empty or floating signifier, that is, a specific sign that is not initially endowed with a fixed semantics but is capable of uniting disparate demands [Laclau 1996]. A continuous struggle over the meaning of this sign takes place both within mass discourse and within scholarly discourse [Laclau, Mouffe 2001]. For example, civilizational discourse was initially structured around the dichotomy of “civilization–barbarism”, in which “civilization” was embodied by the European empires, while barbarism was attributed to all other states, nations, ethnic groups, and races. Today, the situation is different, as such a dichotomy is stigmatized as an expression of racism and Western-centric teleology. The struggle now revolves around the process of endowing particular projects of local civilizations with meaning, as well as defining and redefining their boundaries on the map — the boundaries of civilizations as distinct imagined communities.

It is necessary to clarify the object of our research. In this paper, we proceed from the thesis that in the context of strengthening the actorship of alternative political projects of modernity, the transformation of memorial practices is actualized [Anikin 2021]. One consequence of the information and communication revolution has been both the intensification of the transformation of identities [Anikin 2024], and the emergence of the past itself as plural, owing to the expansion of social mobility [Anikin 2020]. In the context of competition among projects of modernity, history functions as an arena of struggle for the hegemony of different projects of modernity. Since a shared past lays the foundation for the formation of imagined communities, history becomes the principal instrument for legitimizing or delegitimizing the claims of alternative modernities to existence.

In summary, it is necessary to say that the key problem of the civilizational paradigm is excessive essentialization, which makes it possible to represent civilizations themselves as closed, static and timeless structures. However, this

problem can be overcome through the adoption of a constructivist methodology. In this case, civilizations begin to be understood as broad supranational identities (“imagined communities”) that possess a far more flexible discursive nature. Such a move makes it possible to take two steps: first, to avoid essentialism in the analysis of civilization; and second, to meet the demand for non-linear approaches capable of responding to complex and multifaceted challenges.

Civilization and Cancel Culture

From a constructivist perspective, civilizational identity represents the outcome of specific socio-political and cultural-symbolic processes that emerge as a response to the project of national identity. Civilizational identity arises as a supranational framework for combining cultural diversity and political autonomy under conditions in which the formation of national narratives erodes preceding forms of collective identity.

The construction of civilizational identity proceeds through the selection of disparate cultural symbols, in the course of which the same symbols may be mobilized as elements of different civilizations. In this case, civilizational conflict is conditioned not by the primordial “otherness” of civilizations, but by their need to employ identical symbols intended to signify the distinctiveness and continuity of their developmental trajectories, while also serving as resources in the process of symbolic competition among civilizational formations.

Following the end of World War II, the system of international relations entered a postcolonial era, during which perceptions of the state and the nation, as well as the normative interpretation of politics, gradually began to change [Bondarenko 2022]. In practice, this led to the gradual destabilization of the Eurocentric model, as former colonies and peripheral countries acquired a voice. If in the twentieth century this was an ascending trend, then in the twenty-first century the need to reassess the colonial past has become a significant factor in international relations. However, despite the growing importance of the voices of countries of the Global South, after the collapse of communism the West remained the only force capable of effectively imposing its understanding of modernity. Yet after the failure of the fourth wave of democratization, when decisions were made to overthrow regimes perceived as posing a threat to the United States [Nemchinova 2012], the limits of the expansion of the Western project of modernity became evident. Confronted with a crisis of legitimacy, it lost the capacity to impose its values through direct violence, which shifted conflict into the symbolic sphere. Thus, the contemporary configuration

of conflicts among modernities differs significantly from the balance of forces of the previous century. This raises the issue of alternative projects of modernity that have emerged in connection with the revival of non-Western forms of identity, which have inevitably begun to activate alternative ways of interpreting and understanding the world. The key question now concerns the interaction among these competing projections, which necessitates identifying the principal axes of the most acute conflicts.

First, during the Cold War, many of the most salient contradictions within Western societies — such as social inequality or the conduct of colonial wars — could be ignored due to the acceptance of internal tensions stemming from confrontation with an existential enemy in the form of the USSR. However, after the collapse of the bipolar system, the legitimacy of a permanent state of emergency gradually began to erode. This has inevitably led citizens in Western countries to reactivate previously forgotten contradictions. One such point of tension emerged around the colonial past, which concerned interpretations of both domestic and foreign policy. Within the West and along its borders, a confrontation between two projects gradually began to take shape: a “realist” project, which acknowledges existing contradictions and regards them as part of the current order, and a “progressivist” project, which denies established disagreements and calls for radical social transformation [Anikin, Turkin 2025].

Second, today we are witnessing a clear crisis of the neoliberal model of globalization that emerged in the 1980s. This has led states to cease viewing global trade as an absolute value and to shift authority from the supranational to the national level. As a result, alternative projects of modernity are being reactivated — projects that place the nation and national interests at the forefront. Examples include both the emergence of illiberal democracies and the growing popularity of right- and left-wing populist movements across the world. The resurgence of the national over the global revives tensions between the idea of tradition and the idea of linearly conceived progress. Under such conditions, states begin a process of identity reconstruction, whereby the previous neoliberal phase is gradually consigned to oblivion in favor of a nationally oriented historical narrative.

Third, it is necessary to note the growing influence of religious thinking. This development has been facilitated by three factors: the Iranian Revolution, the rise of the New Christian Right in the United States, and the collapse of the Soviet Union as an example of atheist governance [Uzlaner 2019: 12–13]. As a result, today we are witnessing a revival of the demand for religious consciousness capable of challenging the secular worldview underlying Western modernity. This dynamic is already generating conflict between two additional projects of modernity: the religious and

the secular. An important example is the growing popularity of Islam, which presents itself as an alternative to the Western model of development. In response, Europe — amid concerns about religious extremism and terrorism — has initiated attempts to construct a form of “Euro-Islam”, that is, an adapted version of Islam designed to align with the Western project of modernity.

Thus, today we can identify the following examples of confrontation between different projects of modernity: progressivism versus realism, the global versus the particular, and the secular versus the religious. Naturally, this list is not exhaustive, but it highlights the principal points of contention.

The contradictions between different projects of modernity do not unfold according to the logic of a “war of all against all”. Rather, they are far more complex, multifaceted, and nonlinear. The primary model of their interaction is cultural transfer — that is, processes of intersection and mutual permeability among different cultures [Sledzevsky 2021]. However, while cultural transfers function as a mechanism of interaction among local cultures, under conditions of civilizational identity formation the need for such transfer becomes a determining condition in the choice of a particular model of relating the civilizational project itself to its historical projection. Civilizational transfer, in turn, represents a mechanism for the exchange of specific cultural elements between different civilizations, involving the operation of “embedding” foreign elements by marking them as autochthonous or authentic.

Let us distinguish two types of civilizational transfer that determine the dynamics of competition between projects of modernity: synchronic and diachronic.

The first type of transfer involves the influence of one project of modernity on others, thereby intertwining with them and transforming in the process. At the current historical stage, such transfer is associated with the Western project of modernity. This is due to the fact that it was Western civilization that proved capable, above all, of formulating universalist discourses extending beyond the framework of nation-states [Chakrabarty 2021]. Through globalization, this project achieved its widest diffusion, contributing to the homogenization of cultural landscapes. However, today, under conditions of globalization’s retrenchment and the recognition of the limits of Western civilizational influence, this mechanism is experiencing a crisis as it encounters resistance from local traditions and alternative models of modernity. Such transfer, by disregarding cultural specificities, seeks to absorb other projections of modernity, subordinating them to a dominant logic and presenting itself as a totality — thereby intensifying conflicts and stimulating the search for new, non-Western forms of cultural exchange. In the context of the politics of memory, this entails the alignment

of all alternative interpretations of the past, articulated by competing projects of modernity, with a synchronic narrative.

The second type of transfer presupposes a break with the stage-based (formational) conception of civilization, in which a particular stage of societal development is presented as normative and, consequently, as universal for a given community. In the context of the politics of memory, this process is associated with the antiquization of history, whereby selective fact selection allows the narrative to smooth over the contradictory features of the past. What occurs is a retrospective extension of the current state of a project of modernity across the entire historical past of the community. However, unlike under conditions of synchronic transfer, such a narrative does not seek to present itself as universal for alternative projects of modernity. Instead, it closes in upon its own community, the consequence of which is a narrowing of the public sphere available to that particular project of modernity. In this sense, a project of modernity acquires a historical projection, within which connections are established between the contemporary contours of the civilizational community and the trajectory of its development.

The following types of civilizational historical projections can be distinguished:

1. Continuity-based projection, in which a civilization, within the context of symbolic competition with other projects of modernity, constructs its identity through reference to preceding subjects that are likewise endowed with a civilizational identity (for example, “Moscow as the Third Rome”).

2. Indigenous projection, within which the autochthonous character of the civilization is emphasized, along with the formulation of the idea of maximizing the temporal extension of its existence into the past (with a wide range of examples — from critiques of Normanism to references to the *Veles Book*).

3. Synthetic projection, which enables a civilizational community to perceive itself as a symbolic isthmus between other civilizations — thereby, on the one hand, significantly expanding the symbolic repertoire of images of the past, and on the other hand, substantially complicating the construction of a coherent narrative (for example, Russia as a bridge between West and East).

It is precisely within the implementation of the synthetic projection that the configuration of a civilizational historical space out of cultural elements belonging to different traditions takes place. This process initiates not only a multivariant selection of these traditions but also renders salient the task of discrediting the claims of other projects — civilizational or national — to those images of the past that legitimize a given civilizational identity. Within the first two projections, the ostracism of images of the past constitutes an excessive instrument of civilizational identity

formation, since such images are either integrated into the current identity or regarded as inherently alien. In the case of the synthetic projection, the instrumentalization of “Cancel culture” is determined by the need to emphasize symbolic boundaries, given that these images of the past may serve as foundational elements of other projects of modernity.

It should be specified separately that transfers are not mutually exclusive; rather, they express one or another dominant tendency. Any understanding of modernity, by virtue of its own capacities, tends to present itself as universal. Therefore, even the position of complete impermeability between modernities presupposes presenting itself as universal, where the very understanding of civilizations as isolated and closed appears as a universal principle. The key feature thus becomes the strategy of interaction with another culture: horizontally (synchronically) or vertically (diachronically). It is precisely through transfers that civilizational identities are constructed as an understanding of the supranational community to which the individual belongs.

Under conditions of a crisis of universalist narratives [Miller 2024; David 2020] and the intensification of contradictions in the field of international security, states face an objective need to reconstruct their current identities. Whereas previously a single narrative, based on the idea of forming a unified humanity grounded in liberal norms and values, was dominant, today it is giving way to a rigid binary logic of “us–them”. This shift is accompanied by a rejection of deliberation in favor of conflict as a means of resolving contradictions [Turkin 2024, 108]. In such a political context, one of the most effective instruments for reconstructing identity becomes the use of the image of the “The Other”, which makes it possible to delineate the boundaries of the collective “We”, endowed with ontologically prioritized qualities, from “Them”, endowed with negative traits [Neumann 2004].

One of the most illustrative examples of this process is the popularity of a contemporary form of social ostracism — “Cancel culture”, the aim of which is to deny the object of cancellation access to public discourse. On a global scale, this leads to a situation in which interaction between different versions of modernity is replaced by projections that are based on binary oppositions rather than on the experience of dialogue. In this case, the “The Other” appears as a pre-constructed and demonized image that functions primarily as a projection of the fears and traumas of the actor who constructs it. As a result, the identities that emerge become “suspended” and “pre-scripted”, grounded in simulacra — that is, in copies that have no original in reality [Baudrillard 2015]. Such civilizational identities gradually acquire the features of hyperreality. In this case, “cancellation” does not mean the complete removal of particular images of the past from the public space, but rather

their discrediting as invented and inauthentic, which makes it impossible to regard them as foundations of a full-fledged civilizational trajectory.

At this point, a formula of the double construction of civilizational identity through “Cancel culture” emerges: by denying the object of cancellation access to public discourse, an image of the “other” is produced that expresses not so much a particular position as the fears and traumas that unsettle the subject initiating the procedure of cancellation. What becomes truly significant here is the theorem of the “Self-fulfilling prophecy”, which states that “if people define situations as real, they are real in their consequences”. Consequently, the identity of the subject of cancellation is also transformed under the influence of the very object of cancellation that it has itself created.

The legitimation of the prohibition on access to public discourse reaches its ultimate expression when the past — and, as a consequence, the future — of a competing project of modernity is cancelled. An inevitable consequence of this becomes attempts at the oblivion of entire civilizations and their destruction at the symbolic level. At the same time, such “oblivion” can never be complete, since the identity that has been formed begins to rest on a rigid binary opposition. Therefore, the actual destruction of an alternative identity will inevitably lead to the destruction of the identity of the subject of cancellation. Consequently, there is nothing more threatening for the subject initiating the procedure of cancellation than the actual “cancellation” of the actor against whom it is directed.

This manifests itself both within the framework of the universalist Western project and in non-Western forms of modernity. The key phase of the process described becomes active interaction with hyperreal images. For example, in public discourse, Russia constructs the category of an “imagined West”, which in official discourse appears as a unified and consolidated actor endowed with qualities of spiritual emptiness, dishonesty, and aggressiveness. The history of this “imagined West” is represented through the prism of deception, whereby all the achievements of this project of modernity are understood to be based not on labor, science, and enlightenment, but on the simple plundering of the resources of its colonies. From the opposite side, an “imagined Russia” is formed in a similar manner, whose existential goal is already the destruction of the West. The history of Russia itself is represented through the prism of confrontation between an authoritarian state and individual dissidents aligned with the West. Despite the different nodal points in these narratives, an inevitable consequence in both cases is the “cancellation” of entire civilizations due to their nonconformity to the ethical standards of the community that articulates the discourse.

Conclusion

In the context of the crisis of universalism, “Cancel culture” becomes a key instrument in the struggle between competing civilizational projects. Since no project today possesses sufficient resources to establish itself as universal, civilizations are compelled to rely primarily on discursive practices of excluding alternative ways of interpreting not only modernity but also history. An evident consequence of these transformations is the international trend toward isolationism and the securitization of identity.

Within the framework of the analysis, the key points of conflict between projects of modernity have been identified: progressivism versus realism; the global versus the particular; the secular versus the religious. The first point of tension concerns the capacity of the Western project to reorganize its discourse in response to the objective need to reconstruct global hegemony, as the emergence of a voice for former colonies has called into question the dominance of Western countries. The second point of tension relates to the crisis of globalization, when a slowdown in economic growth has activated nationally oriented policies aimed at defending not universal but particular demands. The third point of tension concerns the revival of more archaic forms of consciousness that generate an alternative episteme, i.e., a dominant mode of understanding the world. Each of these conflicts influences models of the politics of memory constructed by contemporary actors: the preservation of a Eurocentric model of the past versus its reconstruction through the victimization of the colonial past; the attempt to construct a global history versus the triumph of local narratives; and an agonistic model of memory versus the spread of sacralized historical myths.

In the course of the study, the specific feature of “Cancel culture” as a mode of constructing civilizational identity was identified. It is noted that, in this case, the “The Other” functions as an instrument of identity formation. A formula of double construction is outlined: by denying the object of cancellation access to public discourse, an image of the “Other” is produced that expresses not so much a specific position as the fears and traumas that unsettle the subject initiating the procedure of cancellation. However, in creating the “Other”, the initiating subject of cancellation also transforms its own identity under the influence of the image it has itself produced, primarily by constructing its own image of the past — designed either to emphasize difference from other representations, continuity with preceding civilizations, or the incorporation of elements from various cultural traditions.

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