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Judicial and Legal Dimensions of Russia's Confrontation With the West

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THE WEST'S judicial and legal activities, including efforts to give the military conflict in Ukraine the semblance of an international criminal procedure – putting Russia as a whole, its military, and top officials on trial, as it were – are inevitable and predictable. In the past, international law in its traditional form (and at some point, since World War II, also in the form of criminal procedure) used to take center stage only after the cessation of hostilities, as the victors' right to define a new international order, but these days, it tends to accompany military actions and sometimes even precede them. This has to do with, among other things, the transformation of classical wars into "hybrid" ones that include not only military but also information, economic, and other components and feature no less fierce and crucial legal battles. It also has to do with the unwillingness of certain Western elites to risk their lives on the actual battlefield, participating instead in armchair battles and seeking to appropriate the morally unchallenged legacy of World War II while demonizing the enemy who will allegedly be put on trial at a new Nuremberg tribunal, etc.

The West's judicial and legal actions can and should be discussed in purely technical terms; they can and should be countered, disputed, challenged, litigated, etc. Generally speaking, it is up to lawyers, including experts in international law, to deal with such matters.

There is no politically neutral justice, since the judiciary is a branch of government pursuing state policy in the legal field that in turn reflects the power of a certain political force that has established the current constitutional order. Personalities within this system of governance may or may not change, creating more or less personalistic, democratic, and other regimes, but power itself remains unchanged – at least within the given constitutional order that can only be changed in a revolutionary way.

International justice, including criminal justice, is not more politically independent or neutral than national justice. Up to a certain point, it could only exist within extremely narrow bounds.

On one hand, Russia is free to administer justice and determine what forms it will take on its national – i.e., politically controlled – territory based on its own legal, geopolitical, and value orientations. On the other hand, as a sovereign nation, it also has the right to completely and unconditionally ignore "external" justice, wherever it may originate. As the prominent French constitutionalist George Vedel noted, sovereignty means that "the state has neither superiors, nor equals in status, nor competitors,"² – i.e., the optics of the state are always a priori one-sided.

Russia is sovereign on the territory it controls just as it is legally powerless on the territory of "unfriendly countries." You can respect or appreciate Western legal consciousness as much as you like, but it should be remembered that nothing is impossible in the institutional realm. Needless to say, Western society is complex and heterogeneous; there are healthy forces there (in our understanding) – i.e., forces that are sympathetic toward us and sometimes even willing to act in the judicial and legal field using particular national or supranational mechanisms. Naturally, such forces should be fully supported.

to implement at least some effective mechanisms of international criminal justice with respect to Russia, the West would have to engage with Russia's own sovereign institutional mechanisms. This would, of course, be in conflict with the original idea of "excluding" Russia from all international organizations, but this emotional policy, which is nothing but a tool of psychological pressure, will sooner or later be replaced by a smarter and more calculated legal policy that Russia could appreciate for purely diplomatic reasons despite being in essence a legal Trojan horse.

It seems that the ECHR's stepped-up activities in Ukraine, which had previously suspended all complaints against Russia, has to do with this kind of interpretation and perception of Russia's indecision.

Nostalgic feelings about the bygone ECHR era are explicable and humanly understandable, but we should hardly continue to believe in its altruism and desire to improve the rights of ordinary Russians. Our concern should not be about nostalgia or fading illusions, but about the risks, albeit hypothetical ones, that careless preservation of international platforms could create for exerting additional judicial and legal pressure on Russia in the spirit of "international criminal justice."

Stability of the Antarctic Treaty System Amid Growing Confrontation Between the West and Russia

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TRANSIENT changes in the modern world order have a significant impact not only on the foreign and domestic policies of individual states, even the most isolated ones, but also on vast geographic regions of our planet. One of them is Antarctica, which occupies about 52.5 million square kilometers, or one-tenth of the Earth's surface, around the South Pole. This area of the planet, which has no state or customs borders and no permanent population, industry, agriculture, transport communications, urban settlements, or military bases, is under international control. This control regime was established by the Antarctic Treaty of December 1, 1959 (hereinafter referred to as the Treaty), and other regional acts of international law included in the Antarctic Treaty System. Despite its uniqueness and natural isolation, Antarctica continues to be influenced by world politics and economics.

In the early 21st century, the international community formulated its main security challenges: global political and economic crises, threats of nuclear war and large-scale technological disasters, information attacks over the Internet, major natural disasters, bacterial and viral pandemics, and global climate change. In 2019, the long-forgotten global threat of a viral disease pandemic shook the world.

It was hard to imagine that Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, launched on February 24, 2022, would elicit such a massive response from the world community with consequences affecting many areas of human life. The diverse range of direct connections and feedback loops firmly entrenched in the world economic system turned out to be unforeseen. Unexpectedly, the reaction of the collective West to the Russian military operation that took place many thousands of kilometers from Antarctica also affected the South Pole community. Time will tell whether and to what extent the 60-year-old

“Antarctic immunity” will be able to resist new challenges to the global world order, but our country must substantiate its position on this issue and actively defend it on various international platforms.

A new 21st-century challenge to the Treaty has forced the Antarctic community to focus on environmental issues and the impact of global climate change on the Antarctic region.

Some political analysts assert that the Treaty has already fulfilled its historical mission and should be replaced by a new act of international law. Growing differences and tensions in modern global politics are raising questions about the very foundations of Antarctica’s political and legal status – in particular, its cornerstone, Article IV of the Treaty, which settled the issue of territorial claims in the region. Such claims were announced during the first half of the 20th century by the governments of the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, Norway, France, Argentina, and Chile.

The author assumed that the Antarctic community would inevitably face new challenges, so the established international system of Antarctic governance must not only look for new answers to such challenges but also promptly forestall them.

ECONOMIC activity in Antarctica is limited to the use of its marine biological resources and tourism. Use of the genetic resources of living organisms currently living in Antarctica is still at the stage of scientific research rather than production. Therefore, global economic problems have only a limited impact on the Antarctic region. The last use of weapons in Antarctica was recorded back in the 1940s, after which this region became demilitarized. Global natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, catastrophic earthquakes, and tsunamis are not a threat to Antarctica. Therefore, many experts believe that global climate change continues to be the main threat to the South Polar Region.

However, in 2020, the Antarctic community was greatly concerned about the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

The coronavirus arrived on the sixth continent. Nevertheless, the strict quarantine measures taken by national Antarctic programs have yielded positive results; the disease has not become widespread in Antarctica. Moreover, the Antarctic stations currently have modern means of diagnostics and treatment, and, as a rule, all field personnel must be vaccinated before going to the Antarctic.

It is important to recall that Russia took no retaliatory discriminatory measures in Antarctica against other Consultative Parties and considers it necessary to inform all parties to the Treaty of its commitment to all legal norms currently in force in the international Antarctic community. At the same time, our country must reiterate that restrictions or prohibitions on RAE activities in the Antarctic will not escape attention and response.

In 2004, when Ukraine applied for Consultative Party status, it was to be discussed at ATCM XXVII in Cape Town (South Africa). The New Zealand delegation opposed granting the status to Ukraine and noted the illegal poaching by a Ukrainian fishing trawler of Antarctic toothfish in an area protected by the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources. The Russian delegation at this meeting did not oppose the Ukrainian application; it merely did not support it.

Ukraine’s unconstructive and even aggressive position on Antarctic issues received the collective support of the pro-Western Antarctic community and was also reflected in the activities of such governing bodies of the Treaty System as COMNAP and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), which support disseminating pro-Ukrainian political positions in their international Antarctic organizations. Such activities totally contradict the mandates of these organizations.

We must not forget that participation in international programs rigidly binds partners in joint projects, and the withdrawal of even one participant from an agreement sometimes creates insurmountable difficulties for some other partners. The political decisions that some proWestern Consultative Parties

made concerning their cooperation with Russian organizations in Antarctica may seriously affect the ability of these parties to perform their national tasks in the South Polar Region.

It is well known that in the more than 60 years of the Treaty's existence, Consultative Parties have participated in numerous military and political conflicts in other regions of the planet, repeatedly raising the specter of a worldwide nuclear war. However, these conflicts and the strongest political disagreements among the Consultative Parties have never become the subject of ATCM discussions. That tradition was violated for the first time by Ukraine in 2022, during ATCM XLIV in Berlin. Ukraine's position was supported by representatives and supporters of the Western world, including founding countries of the Treaty.

Unfortunately, we have to note that the delegations of Australia, Argentina, Belgium, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom, the US, France, Chile, and Japan probably forgot not only the text of the Treaty, signed by their predecessors on December 1, 1959, in Washington, and the ATCM procedural rules, but also the long-standing tradition of the international Antarctic legal system. The wave of Russophobia that has swept the Western world in recent years has eroded the basic principles and foundations of the Antarctic Treaty established at the height of the Cold War. There is a widespread opinion among some Western political scientists that the international law formed after the end of the World War II has become obsolete, and Russia is not entitled to permanent membership in the UN Security Council. However, not all member states of this authoritative international organization support the position of the US and its allies. A similar situation is developing in the Treaty System in which representatives of the pro-Western world have a clear and strong majority over supporters of Russia's positions.

It should be noted that not all of the Consultative Parties' governments demanded that their working contacts with Russia on Antarctic research be suspended. The current situation may lead to certain discord among parties to the Treaty. It is worth recalling that some of its founders, who did not abandon their interests in exercising their own national sovereignty in Antarctica, unofficially desired such a result. We hope that other leading Antarctic powers will not ignore this problem, since it could lead to the emergence of several international treaties on Antarctica, with their parties united not by similar mindsets but by political alliances.

China's Hybrid Warfare Strategies: A View From the West

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Keywords: China, West, hybrid warfare

THE TERM "warfare" has increasingly blurred boundaries in the 21st century, with countries coming up with new forms of conflicts against adversary states. This has led to the emergence of new terms such as "postmodern wars", "mutiny wars", and "network-centric warfare". The best-known of these new terms is "hybrid warfare," which came into being between the late 1990s and early 2000s. It is believed to have emerged in the US.

Hybrid wars chiefly involve the use of cyber, economic, psychological, geopolitical, media, ideological, and geographical spaces ("fronts"). Normally, several of them are used at once.

In the West, it is commonly believed that Russia is waging a largescale hybrid war that threatens democratic countries. In fact, Russia is labeled the main hybrid threat, and this label has been applied particularly frequently since the reunification of Crimea with Russia. It has been argued recently that China, too, is using hybrid tools to consolidate its status as a world power. Let's examine Chinese activities on each of the aforementioned hybrid warfare fronts.

THE US Defense Department, in its 2020 annual report to Congress on military and security developments in China, said that the People's Liberation Army (PLA), China's armed forces, included a unit called the Network Systems Department, which was "responsible for information warfare with a mission set that includes cyberwarfare, technical reconnaissance, electronic warfare, and psychological warfare," and that "its current major target is the United States".

Sergio Miracola of the Italian Institute for International Political Studies believes that China has a holistic cyberwarfare strategy [31] resting on two principles – the "people's war" doctrine ("the wider population," Miracola says, "could be mobilized for warfare operations mainly through ideological campaigns"), and "civil-military fusion" – "merging the civilian sphere with the military" in order to achieve "a higher and more sophisticated military flexibility." In putting these principles into practice, "the government has promoted the creation of cyber warrior units directly composed of university students and civilians at large."

A DOCUMENT released by the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) directly states that China and Russia "seek to fracture US alliances and partnerships through a combination of diplomatic and economic actions". This amounts to accusing China and Russia of using hybrid warfare technologies.

China's construction of roads, bridges, and tunnels abroad as part of its Belt and Road Initiative is also seen as a set of hybrid operations.

PSYCHOLOGICAL warfare aims to manipulate the adversary. Ways to do it are "to penetrate a rival's decision-making structure, to create mayhem, to boost antigovernment sentiments, to manoeuvre rival, and seek to eliminate will to fight among antagonist states. It will enhance rumours, fabricated stories, blame game, brinkmanship, diplomatic pressure, hegemony further [sic] atmosphere of fright".

China is also accused of waging a "legal war" to justify and consolidate its international policies.

INFLUENCING public opinion through mass media is one of the three key postulates proclaimed in the PLA Principles of Organization of Political Work. "The GPD's Propaganda Department broadcasts sustained internal and external strategic perception management campaigns through mass media and cyberspace channels to promote specific themes favourable for China's image abroad – political stability, peace, ethnic harmony, and economic prosperity".

IT WAS, in fact, the Chinese military and not the American military that first publicly articulated the hybrid warfare concept, calling it "unrestricted warfare."

It was only in 2014 that research on hybrid warfare began to be published in Russia on a large scale. Previously, this subject interested a narrow group of specialists who treated it as a secondary point in dealing with other matters. Developments in Ukraine and the reunification of Crimea with Russia in 2014 brought a storm of accusations against our country, prompting Russian military experts to study hybrid warfare more actively.

NATO accuses Russia of taking provocative, aggressive, and destabilizing actions. Our country was repeatedly mentioned in a statement issued at a North Atlantic Council meeting in Brussels in 2021. China did not receive as much attention. It was said to have "ambitions and assertive behaviour [that] present systemic challenges to the rulesbased international order and to areas relevant to Alliance security" [8]. However, the term "Chinese hybrid warfare" will eventually appear more and more in

documents and speeches in NATO member countries and in states friendly to them, because China's step-by-step activities to implement the Chinese dream of national revival that we have examined in this article are essentially hybrid operations.

Bioethics in International Relations

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Keywords: bioethics, biohistory, biopolitics, biopower, international relations

THE PRESENTATION of Biblioteka bioetiki [The Library of Bioethics] at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation offered an occasion to return to the discussion of the global challenges facing humanity amid unprecedentedly rapid and radical changes to the world and international relations. This unique 10-volume publication, prepared on the initiative of Academic Alexander Chuchalin, chairman of the Russian Committee on Bioethics, draws upon the creative legacy of outstanding thinkers of the past and inspires contemplation of the present in which the range of bioethical problems is constantly expanding and occupying an increasingly important place in anxious reflections on the future of civilization.

The understanding of bioethics has evolved over time from ideas related mainly to the ethics of medicine and biomedical research to awareness of the existence and significance of bioethical issues in almost all areas related to human and social life and life sciences. Bioethics today encompasses "views on morality, decisions, behavior, and politics."

Biopolitics is the application of life sciences to politics as a discipline that incorporates the theories and data of life sciences into the study of political behavior and public policy. The term "biopolitics" is believed to have been introduced in the mid-1970s by French philosopher and political scientist Michel Foucault, who used it to denote how social and political power is used to control human life.

According to Foucault, biopolitics is based on the principle of "state interest," rooted in the history of international relations of the 17th and 18th centuries, which postulates the priority of the welfare, existence, and development of the state.¹⁰ At the same time, biopolitics acts as a factor of "social segregation and hierarchization," providing "relations of domination and effects of hegemony."¹¹ Knowledge of the objective laws of society's existence serves as the basis for state power.¹² Biopower thus arises as a result of the statization of biological life by means of the inclusion of biological and human factors in political strategies.

Agamben recalls that in Nazi Germany, Jews and Sinti and Roma were first declared unworthy of life, removed from the jurisdiction of national legislation, and then sent to death camps. The same was done to political opponents and others slated for extermination. The present-day Nazis in Ukraine are acting in a similar manner, having excluded from legal protection first residents of Donbass who rebelled against oppression, and then the entire Ukrainian people who found themselves in a concentration camp of violent Nazi occupation

Agamben defines a concentration camp as a space of the ultimate manifestation of biopower in which "a law that seeks to decide on life is embodied in a life that coincides with death." A concentration camp, unlike a prison, which is a full-fledged social institution, is absolute exclusion from the social space.

The imprint of victory in the Cold War, allegedly won by the West, pressed on the minds of its ruling elite, is actually doing it a disservice, forcing it to indulge in wishful thinking and introducing the possibility of a fatal error in conclusions and decisions. This error is apparent primarily in the West's calculation that Russia can be defeated and destroyed as a sovereign state – a calculation that Western state figures, having disregarded all diplomatic norms and international decency, no longer hesitate to declare openly.

For the West, the concentration camp model is nothing new. This model has become part of the Western paradigm of power and its manifestations in foreign and domestic policies starting with the camps for native Americans in the 1830s and British concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer War at the turn of the 20th century, where the bare life of their inhabitants quickly turned into its biological opposite.

In bioethical discourse, the concept of the “society of the spectacle,” dating back to an eponymous work written more than half a century ago by eccentric French philosopher Guy Debord,²⁵ has recently acquired a whole new meaning. The impression of international relations as a theater of the absurd has intensified with the rise to senior government posts of Vladimir Zelensky, a popular Ukrainian comedian, as president of Ukraine in Kiev; Boris Johnson, who looks very much like a clown, as British prime minister in London; and president Joseph Biden, who constantly amuses the public with his senile forgetfulness and obvious signs of growing dementia, in Washington. Comic actors are playing out a dangerous spectacle with possible tragic consequences for all of humanity.

International relations as a structured process encompasses the stages of formation of political, ethical, and legal ideas and values. The role and place of the moral factor in international relations can be properly defined only in the political, moral, and legal dimension. With the relative independence of politics, morality, and law, they form a dialectically interconnected and interdependent triad within international relations, and the removal of one of its components will destroy its methodological and theoretical integrity.

Systemic bioethical support of foreign policy strategies lies at the interdisciplinary intersection of philosophical, political, ethical, and legal knowledge. The enriching conceptual potential of this knowledge allows political leaders and analysts to form a space for international relations that is scientifically grounded and scientifically controlled, predictable, and fully takes into account the real correlation of objective conditions and subjective factors that ultimately affect the forecasting and modeling of the 21st century world order. The main area of further development of the bioethical component of Russia's foreign policy could be the identification of new trends in the moral and legal regulation of international relations amid the competition and struggle between unipolar and multipolar models of the world order. This also includes international moral and legal aspects of Russia's state interests; Russia's spiritual and moral unity in the context of its international relations; international law; and new challenges to global, regional, and national security.

Unsustainable Sustainability: Agenda 2030 as a Means of Unifying the World

On the 50th Anniversary of the Stockholm Conference and the 30th Anniversary of the First Earth Summit

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Keywords: United Nations (UN), sustainable development, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Agenda 2030, environment

TWO ANNIVERSARIES in 2022 received little attention because of global turbulence but symbolized events whose significance is hard to overestimate. They were two interrelated forums – the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm (June 5-16, 1972), also known as the Stockholm Conference, and the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro (June 3-14, 1992), informally called the Earth Summit. These two conferences laid the basis for the concept of sustainable development and the process of implementing it.

It would be no exaggeration to say that these forums raised international activity to protect the environment and socioeconomic cooperation among countries to a new level. It would be no less epochal than the transition from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age, or from the latter to the Iron Age, if humankind finally comprehends the existential meaning of the sustainable development concept and political elites have the wisdom and sense of responsibility to try to put it into practice.

The sustainable development concept has its roots in the late 1960s and early 1970s. At that time, accelerating environmental degradation made many scientists, civil society activists, and politicians realize that economic development that did not harm the environment was imperative. There were mounting public movements worldwide that protested the thoughtless consumerist use of nature that undermined the very foundations of life on Earth.

Thanks to *Our Common Future*, the term “sustainable development” became firmly fixed in the modern political lexicon, and the international community began to consider ways to implement the concept.

The High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, established in August 2010 by then-UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon, prepared a report for Rio+20 titled *Resilient People, Resilient Planet: A Future Worth Choosing* that contained conclusions and recommendations – a kind of analogue to *Our Common Future*. Russia made a substantial contribution to the report. Alexander Bedritsky, who at that time was adviser on climate change to the Russian president and special representative of the Russian president for climate affairs, was invited to join the team of authors. Rio+20 launched a negotiation process to draw up sustainable development goals (SDGs) and issued a set of decisions to reform international interaction on sustainable development.

The task of organizing and coordinating the implementation of Agenda 2030 was given to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), established in 1992 as a subsidiary body of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The CSD had 53 member states that were elected by ECOSOC for three-year terms based on fair geographical representation.

By 2015, the goals and objectives of sustainable development were clearly formulated, and the implementation of Agenda 2030 was launched based on a revised mechanism.

I HAVE SEEN instability in efforts to achieve sustainable development throughout my career as a diplomat specializing in environmental affairs. The implementation of the sustainable development concept has at times been at the top of UN agendas, as it was in 1992, 2002, 2012, and 2015, but on others, it has been pushed far into the background by various global conflicts, financial shocks, or other cataclysms – or the shortsightedness of many politicians.

Nevertheless, I remain convinced that the sustainable development concept has a great future. There is no alternative to sustainable development if we want to safeguard our environment and at the same

time ensure fruitful socioeconomic development. I am convinced that sustainable development may unify the entire world community. But whether this concept, which is noble in all respects, is implemented primarily depends on the political will of governments – a will that is confirmed not by slogans proclaimed from the UN General Assembly rostrum but by practical work.\

Post-American World, Post-Ukrainian Geopolitics: Russia's Foreign Policy Narrative

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Keywords: post-American world, Ukrainian crisis, Washington's antiRussia policy, Russia and the West

POLITICAL ANALYSTS in many countries, including America, have been discussing a post-American world for years now. The Ukrainian crisis and its impending end allow us to talk about a new kind of geopolitics, since extensive American involvement in this conflict by proxy might mean that the defeat of Kiev will become the defeat of the US/AngloSaxons, albeit indirectly – but that is the only possible form of defeat in the era of nuclear confrontation. After the defeat of Napoleon's France and Hitler's Germany, this is the last missing link in the chain of forceful showdowns between the West and Russia. This will bring a new normal to global and European politics ushered in by a period of nonconfrontation during which the Western elites will learn to accept the new reality. This will be complicated by their euphoria over "victory in the Cold War" and the illusion of a "unipolar world" that have shaped the current generation of Western politicians.

The historical West, true to its deeply rooted historical tradition of containment – if not dismemberment – of Russia, in which the US took the baton from Germany and Great Britain after World War II, opted, quite consciously, for the dual expansion of NATO and the European Union as a guarantee against Russia reviving its status as a strong global power.

Historically, the current crisis completes the cycle of containment of Russia that goes back to World War I, which Berlin fought to prevent – by the logic of the Thucydides' trap – Russia's impressive economic revival (comparable with the current rise of China) thanks to Pyotr Stolypin's reforms and all preceding changes: the abolition of serfdom and the Great Reforms of Alexander II. The country's positions in world trade in grain and oil were firm, its currency was strong, and its economy was growing by about 10%.

The conflict between Russia and the West has a culturalcivilizational dimension that goes back to the schism of 1054, the sack of Constantinople by Crusaders in 1204, and its downfall in 1453. By that time, Christian Orthodoxy had already acquired strategic depth in the form of the Grand Duchy of Muscovy. This is a story of different fates of Christianity in the West, where the Reformation signified a return to the Old Testament, and in the East, primarily in Russia.

Western society has been in decline for at least 50 years. Oswald Spengler predicted it some 100 years ago in his work *The Decline of the West*. The 21st and later centuries would demonstrate, among other things, the internal disintegration of nations into a "formless population" and the slow penetration of primitive states into the highly civilized way of life. Culture is in a crisis that started with the destruction of traditional society as a result of the French and subsequent revolutions of the 19th century

Aristocratic criticism of Western democracy clarifies a lot about America. In his *Democracy in America*, French political analyst Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that there was no freedom of speech in the country where the majority was raising significant barriers to it.

The fact that we are considering these cultural and civilizational factors means we have moved away from Soviet traditions of political science and beyond the very narrow frames of its categories shaped under Western influence despite their outward criticality. They lack philosophical depth and cannot offer an interpretation of contemporary realities as a product of Western and world development of the last 50 years.

It is critically important to bear in mind that it is liberalism, its tendency toward unification and equalization, and not traditional conservatism that serves as the foundation of totalitarianism, including fascism and Nazism.

Russia remained outside the black-and-white picture of the world. Many in the conservative milieu viewed it as a potential partner within the US-Russia-China triangular diplomacy, the foundations of which were laid by Henry Kissinger when he reconciled relations with Beijing on an anti-Soviet basis. Today, the time has come to reach a partnership with Russia so that China's competitive advantages do not grow on account of Siberia, the Far East, and the Arctic.

Washington's anti-Russian course that turned into the Ukrainian project and the current exacerbation cannot be understood apart from America's domestic context. [...] It was during Barack Obama's presidency that Washington bet on aggressive-nationalist transformations or even the Nazification of Ukraine as a means of threatening Russia's identity and history. It intended to undermine the importance of the Great Victory as a moral and spiritual foundation of Russia and to retroactively rehabilitate Nazism as a specific product of Western civilization by equating the USSR and Nazi Germany. That became especially obvious after the Democrats won the 2020 US presidential election.

In the postwar period, the US created an aggressive and, in fact, imperial foreign policy philosophy and tradition with its "grand strategies." This time, the "Young Turks" of political science (Jake Sullivan, Wess Mitchell, and others from the notorious Marathon Initiative) took the helm to accuse the previous generation of losing the war to Beijing and Moscow (including in Ukraine).

The SMO in Ukraine should be defined as a new Great Patriotic War that requires sacrifices and the mobilization of all resources, even if what we are doing on the territory of another state is a preventive war waged with few casualties. At the same time, in terms of consequences for the world order, we can talk about a third world war being waged by our efforts on a limited territory and in a predominantly hybrid mode, although with the prospect of escalation up to the use of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.

Today, the situation can be described as a "trap within a trap" or a "fatal" strategy against a "banal" one.

Lessons of History and a Vision for the Future: Reflections on Russia's Foreign Policy

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Keywords: multipolar world order, crisis of globalization, scientific and technological revolution, cultural and civilizational factor, Russian Federation foreign policy concepts, strong Russia, new international relations infrastructure

OUR COUNTRY is experiencing yet another turning point in its more than 1,000-year history. We are having to deal with the aggressive response of certain foreign players to our absolutely justified actions to protect our vital interests along our western borders. The world is facing an artificially created crisis of European security and of the entire post-World War II international order.

Even though more than one generation in our country has grown up in relatively peaceful times, a state of conflict can be considered a norm for a country with Russia's geography and aspirations.

MAKING history requires a clear vision and understanding of existing realities. Of course, when a lot is changing and not everything is clear, we are often tempted to draw simplified conclusions (e.g., "the world will never be the same again"). Such conclusions easily enter our consciousness but offer little food for thought. For a better understanding of the situation, it is useful to keep in mind the long-term trends in world development – trends that were formed long before the beginning of the special military operation [in Ukraine] and that will continue to move the tectonic plates of history long after it comes to an end.

The path to a new balance of power is proving to be long and nonlinear, as it did on several prior occasions. Russia and other leading states will have to walk it to the end, possibly for many years. Objective facts and phenomena that do not depend on anyone's desires indicate that the stability of the modern world will be ensured by coordinating the interests of several systemically important centers of economic power and political influence. Time will tell how many stakeholders the multipolar system will have and who they will be.

The civilizational approach seems analytically productive and politically sound. According to that approach, the global players would be politically consolidated civilizational communities headed by a leading state.

Whatever the structure of the future world order, rivalry is already unfolding today for the right to establish its basic principles – in simple terms, its norms of behavior.

The BRICS association, which has been playing an increasingly significant role on the world stage, is the embodiment of multipolar diplomacy. The BRICS agenda is "tailored" to address international development issues that its participants have in common. It makes sense to take a closer look at the prospects of the MIKTA group, which includes the regional powers of Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Turkey, and Australia, although the real impact of its activities has yet to be assessed.

On the other hand, the G7 has quite predictably lost its credibility as a generator of solutions to global problems. It has in effect turned into Washington's mechanism for disciplining its satellites on issues reflecting the short-term interests of the US.

The next revolution in science and technology is the driving force behind deep, hard-to-predict transformations in the world's social, economic, and political landscape. The emerging technological order is based on advanced information, communication, and energy technologies, as well as biomedical technologies, nanotechnologies, and artificial intelligence. Ensuring technological sovereignty is a strategic task for any state that takes itself seriously and aspires to an independent role in the new highly competitive era. Major long-term issues on the diplomatic agenda include establishing ethical standards for the use of emerging technologies, developing rules for states' responsible behavior, and adjusting governance structures in the areas of information security, health care, environment, and climate.

UNDERSTANDING the global trends that also affect our country helps determine the vectors of our foreign policy efforts. It is important to understand that in a country like Russia, diplomacy must be based on continuity. Our diplomacy, like a powerful ocean cruiser sailing on a set course, is not built for sharp turns and should avoid them.

THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL process of drafting a new version of the Foreign Policy Concept was launched back in 2021 with the involvement of stakeholder government bodies and the expert community. The principal outline of the document was reviewed in January 2022 at a meeting of the Security Council of Russia. It is currently being finalized considering the development of the international situation. Here I would like to focus on some key aspects of our analysis.

As political analysts rightly point out, “since the time of Peter the Great, Russian elites have looked to the West, adopted Western fashion and behavior, introduced Western institutions, borrowed Western philosophies, desired to join the ranks of the great European powers, and sought to become, in the Soviet era, a global superpower and, later on, a key component of Greater Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok. This is a habit that is hard to shake”. Indeed, the irrational equating of “Western” with “progressive” and “attractive” that took root at that time to a varying extent determined how Russian domestic and foreign policy developed at various stages of the country’s history. Today, this approach is no longer relevant. We have changed, and so has the rest of the world.

Reliance on national interests and international law presupposes the spread far and wide of ideas whose viability has stood the test of time, such as the concept of multipolarity based on cooperation in the Russia-China-India “triangle,” proposed by Yevgeny Primakov back in the 1990s.

Separation from the West, which is therapeutic in many ways, creates conditions for more extensive cooperation with the global East and South. This is particularly apparent today, since those regions are home to the greatest number of our sincere supporters and friends, as shown by their thoughtful, balanced response to Russian actions to protect the inhabitants of Donbass and their clear refusal to join the US-led anti-Russian coalition and sanctions.

THE AXIOM that Russia can either be strong or cease to exist is being thoroughly confirmed today.

Brussels “Sprouts” Won’t Take the Place of Natural Gas

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Keywords: oil, gas, energy sources, coal industry, oil and gas market

DREAMS of a rapidly dawning age of carbon-free energy are not yet lost in Europe. But today, in anticipation of the inevitable cold, this topic has been put on the back burner. The German government has voiced concern that a shortage of gas this winter could lead to crisis in regions across Germany. Meanwhile, in France, heads of industry have serious concerns about the rising cost of gas. They are not ruling out the most grievous consequences, including a total collapse of industry.

Incidentally, the Russian side had previously approached its European partners to conclude long-term supply contracts for natural gas. However, Brussels considered that proposal a nonstarter, giving preference to procuring gas based on floating spot prices.

Thinking on a large scale and not just in seasonal terms requires a firm grasp on what the overall demand for natural gas worldwide will be over at least the next five years.

Over the last few years, those who have relied on the “fuel experts,” who are themselves guided by the interests of the developed economies and primary hydrocarbon consumers, are

being flooded by so-called predictions that are extremely politicized and unprofessional. These “experts” carelessly toss around hundreds of billions of cubic meters of gas into the “plus” or “minus” column. The worst thing is not that they’re putting forward an unrealistic analysis, but that the analysis reflects the contradictory and inconsistent policy of the US and Europe as a whole.

I am sure that demand for natural gas will grow. In the coming five or six years, the planet will need an additional 150 billion cubic meters. If one took away Russian gas from European markets, that would mean having to find another 300 billion cubic meters or so by 2027, over and above the 2021 volumes.

We need a clear and resolute program with explicit volumes of allocated resources, specific recipients, realistic timelines, and individuals in charge (and without any useless “roadmaps”).

According to my estimates, 20 billion cubic meters a year will be needed to complete the gasification of the nation. LNG production – including low tonnage (which we’re already able to do) and medium tonnage (which we’ve got to get a handle on) – will call for another 30 billion cubic meters. But here we must systematically hold people responsible for implementing the program, and assist, organize, and incentivize them. We must attract “brave” foreign investors or, if that doesn’t work, rely on our own efforts.

On the production of fertilizers we spend around 25 billion cubic meters, but in partnership we could use up an additional 20 billion cubic meters on refining. This is not easily done, and will be even more difficult with the foreign market, but – nothing ventured, nothing gained.

With petrochemicals there is a particular situation. Over the last 10 years we have increased the purchase of imported chemical products from \$15 billion to \$30 billion a year. In the good old days, they would have made us lessen this sum by at least half over a couple of years. That means getting production of high value-added items going in Russia for \$15 billion. This is a direct obligation of those who should be clearly designated to carry it out.

Still ahead lies not merely an economic-energy issue, but a politiceconomic-energy issue. That issue is Sila Sibiri [Power of Siberia] 2, which it would be good to bring online in 2027-2028. Of course, with Sila Sibiri 1 at full capacity, that will make 38 [billion], plus 10 billion more from the Far East by 2025.

I reiterate: In the 1970s and 1980s, we were able to create the wonderful Western Siberia oil and gas complex, and now we’re facing another, very serious, but less daunting task. However, we are going to have to mobilize for real.

We are duty-bound to act, and without regard for the contradictory decisions that have entangled the energy policies of Washington and Brussels. It is time to act and to stop trudging along under the banner of Western campaign slogans.

Diplomatic Perceptions of the Sub-Regional Structure of the Post-Soviet Space

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Keywords: post-Soviet space, Eurasian region, critical geopolitics, social constructivism, foreign policy analysis

IN CONTRAST to the rather clearly defined state borders, the division of the ecumene into regions and subregions is relative and highly speculative. It is implemented at the level of individuals and social groups, as well as states and political blocs. The classics of critical geopolitics, who insist on the socially conditioned basis of the perception of political and geographical space, argue that the drawing of boundaries may be both “conceptual and cartographic, imaginary and actual, social and aesthetic.”

The auxiliary, partly instrumental function of the regional division of the world is nothing more than a practical reflection of the subjectively formed, and therefore, by definition, polyvariant perception of the international environment. At the same time, such geopolitical constructs lead to the stereotyping of thinking and the formation of social attitudes toward specific countries belonging to a particular region, and therefore reproduce themselves in practice.

With certain reservations, it is possible to say that ministries of foreign affairs are the exponents of official or “codified” knowledge about the order of the regional structuring of states.

The post-Soviet space, by which we mean the once integral territory within the borders of the former USSR, today made up of 19/15 countries separated/united in various kinds of (dis)integration formats, serves as an extremely interesting and in many ways illustrative example.

IN THE Russian Foreign Ministry, relations with former Soviet neighbors is handled within the framework of five divisions – the First, Second, Third, and Fourth departments of CIS countries, and the Second European Department

The First Department of CIS countries, despite the word “countries” and not the supranational political institution of the Commonwealth of Independent States in its name, acts in the interests of promoting Eurasian integration in various multilateral formats.

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THE PICTURE of the perception of the post-Soviet space by other states of the region differs from Russia’s. Compared to the Russian diplomatic agency, a detailed territorial division is absent in the structure of their ministries of foreign affairs, primarily due to the limited administrative and staffing capabilities of the ministries (this is most true of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which are classified as dwarf states based on population, and the republics of Donbass, whose diplomatic services are currently in the formative stage). In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan is not covered by our analysis, as its organizational structure is not available in open sources.

An extremely distinctive example is set by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, whose foreign policy orientation after 2014 became markedly pro-Western and then Russophobic. For example, the Department of the Russian Federation, which had previously been operating as a separate subdivision, was renamed in 2016 as the Department for Countering Threats from the Russian Federation.

The situation is the exact opposite in friendly Kyrgyzstan, whose foreign ministry also uses a numbering system in the names of territorial departments.

UR RESEARCH supports the following generalizations. Russia’s four-member division of the post-Soviet space into “our own” states of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Transcaucasia, and the “foreign” Baltic states, is quite common in the countries of the Eurasian region but far from universal. Some countries of the region use a three-member model consisting of the countries in the immediate neighborhood that have the greatest geopolitical significance, other countries of the post-Soviet space, and the

“European,” standalone Baltic states. The latter, in turn, do not single out separate subregions within the Eurasian space and, apparently, categorize all former Soviet neighbors of the USSR as post-Soviet “non-Europe.”

At the level of their geopolitical thinking, participants of the integration processes construct the desired configurations of regional associations in different ways. Whereas in Russia, the CIS is the primary unit of the political and geographical “imagination,” in other countries that are the leaders of post-Soviet integration, this interstate association, while not being inferior to the Eurasian Economic Union and the CSTO, certainly does not dominate over them. Finally, a group of states in the post-Soviet space that defines its “organic place” within European organizations is trying to exclude itself from Eurasia by embedding itself in the territorial configuration of the EU and NATO.

A Reliable Tool That Ensures the Operation of Russia’s Western Outpost

On the 30th Anniversary of the Representative Office of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kaliningrad

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Keywords: Representative Office of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kaliningrad, Kaliningrad Province, Kaliningrad, public diplomacy, Russia, Poland, Lithuania, European Union

THIRTY YEARS AGO, on August 14, 1992, the Representative Office of the Russian Foreign Ministry was established in Kaliningrad. This territorial agency handles a variety of tasks. It provides public services to citizens and is responsible for informational and interpretative public outreach. The Representative Office takes an active part in organizing and holding various international events in Kaliningrad Province. Its long history of assistance to regional government bodies in developing foreign relations reliably serves national interests and creates favorable conditions for the functioning of Russia’s exclave region.

FOLLOWING the collapse of the USSR, Kaliningrad Province turned into an “island” surrounded by newly independent states Lithuania and Poland. To coordinate the establishment of the region’s foreign contacts in line with Russia’s national foreign policy, the Russian Foreign Ministry established a representative office in Kaliningrad in August 1992.

At each stage of its 30-year history, the territorial body addressed a wide range of tasks. In the 1990s, it helped form the legislative base for the rapidly developing foreign relations of Kaliningrad Province and coordinated activities to ensure transport accessibility and create a special economic zone in the region. At the same time, it started providing practical services to the growing consular corps.

In the 2000s, the focus shifted to including Kaliningrad Province in cross-border cooperation programs between Russia and the European Union and developing a mechanism for Kaliningrad cargo and passenger transit through Lithuania, which had joined the EU. A significant event in the history of the Representative Office was the May 2005 visit by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Sergey Lavrov, who praised the work of the territorial agency.

ACCORDING TO Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 1478 “On the Coordinating Role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia in Pursuing a National Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation” of November 8, 2011, the principal tasks of the Representative Office include providing the state authorities of Kaliningrad Province with necessary assistance in developing international relations. In this and other areas, the Office operates in close contact with Deputy Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the NorthWestern Federal District Roman Balashov and territorial representative offices of federal government bodies.

THROUGHOUT the history of the territorial agency of the Russian Foreign Ministry in Kaliningrad, the interests of citizens have been the priority. Public services provided by the Representative Office include the issuance of biometric foreign travel passports and return certificates, as well as information and consulting services. Also, the Office issues certain categories of visas to foreigners and provides migration registration for consular employees.

THE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE of the Russian Foreign Ministry in Kaliningrad traditionally pays special attention to public relations. Diplomatic staff does outreach in the form of regular meetings, lectures, and consultations on pressing international issues. The head of the institution, Pavel Mamontov, regularly provides comments to journalists on consular, legal, and other issues.

The agency also interacts with nonprofit organizations, educational and cultural institutions, and business associations. In 2017, it signed cooperation agreements with Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, Kaliningrad State Technical University, and the Children’s Rights Commissioner in Kaliningrad Province.

THE SUCCESSFUL work of the Representative Office of the Russian Foreign Ministry in Kaliningrad is ensured by its highly professional and motivated personnel. Its partners comment on the employees’ responsible attitude and impressive language skills. It is worth noting that the agency’s diplomatic staff prepares information and reference materials on a wide range of issues.

THE KALININGRAD Representative Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has extensive experience participating in the preparation of international events, including high-level meetings. From its first years of existence, the territorial agency has provided support for meetings in Kaliningrad Province of Russian ambassadors to the Baltic countries and countries of Northern Europe.

During its 30-year history, the territorial body of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has firmly established itself as a platform that ensures a favorable external environment for Kaliningrad Province – a unique region of the Russian Federation.

Science Communication in India Today

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Keywords: science communication, India, scientific temper, science literacy

HUMAN WELL-BEING is inseparable from science, technology, and innovation. The impact of science on society can hardly be overestimated, yet the impact of society on science is also growing. Science is no longer a field accessible to and understandable by only a limited number of specialists. It is becoming clearer that society wants to understand the results of scientific and technical achievements and their potential impact on life. Science communication is thus playing a greater role in society.

In Russia, “science communication” and “popularization of science” are the most popular and widely used terms. “Disseminating scientific knowledge, raising the prestige of science, popularizing scientific and technological achievements” are among the aims of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS). At the same time, many Russian universities – ITMO University and Lomonosov Moscow State University, in particular – use the term “science communication” to define their educational programs.

There is an opinion in the research community that “science communication” is a much broader term than “popularization of science.”

In Russia, science communication has covered several stages stretching from scientific propaganda in the Soviet Union to its decline in the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century and its later revival. Since 2014, science has been popularized in Internet resources and specialized education programs; voluntary associations are formed to promote and develop science communication.

IN INDIA, scientific and technological development is treated as a strategically important political trend, since science and technology are considered important tools for dealing with social and economic problems. In this context, science communication comes to the fore; it is a method of informing the public about the latest R&D achievements and, even more importantly, a method of teaching critical thinking.

The term “scientific temper” has been used in state documents regulating the country’s scientific and technological development. According to Art. 51A “Fundamental Duties” (Point h) of the Constitution of India, “It shall be the duty of every citizen of India to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform.”³ It should be said that the term has not received an official definition, which means that The Discovery of India remains the only source of its official explanation. We can say that in India, “scientific temper” is analogous to Western “science communication,” even if it is also a tool for dealing with the country’s social and economic problems.

In the 21st century, science communication has been addressed in special sections of all sorts of acts regulating the science and technology policy of India. The Science and Technology Policy of 2003 was the first document to define the main policy objectives as advancing scientific temper and fully integrating science and technology into all spheres of national activity on a sustainable basis. The document specified the practical measures and conditions under which this aim could be achieved.⁵ The document Science, Technology and Innovation Policy of 2013 said that science communication was equally important for the public at large and for decision-makers.

Even though these normative-legal documents that regulate scientific and technological development in India mention science communication and scientific temper, India, unlike China, does not yet have a legal act that regulates policy in this field. In fact, these concepts have not yet acquired official definitions.

ONE FUNCTION of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) of the Ministry of Science and Technology of India is to promote science and technology at all levels, including the regional and municipal.

The National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR), established in 2002, is India’s biggest institution responsible for science communication activities. It relies on scientific research journals in many areas of science and technology to ensure formal communication

inside the academic community and promotes the dissemination of science and technology information among the broader public, including schoolchildren and students, through print media.¹⁰ NISCAIR's main task is to train qualified science communicators; it runs postgraduate tech courses in Science and Technological Communication.

The state organizations involved in science communication are connected with its various aspects and rely on various mechanisms to raise science and technology awareness among as many Indian citizens as possible. Special attention is paid to the younger generations, to shape their thinking based on scientific knowledge rather than false scientific and traditional beliefs.

IN INDIA, the media have been an important channel of science communication since 1915, when Vigyan, a popular Hindi-language scientific monthly, first began to be published. It is still published today. In 2002, The Indian Journal of Science Communication, the first Indian journal dealing directly with science communication, first appeared; it is published twice a year by the Indian Science Communication Society and is supported by NISCAIR. But there are several problems hindering the functioning of this science communication tool: the low level of general and scientific knowledge of the Indian population, science jargon that readers find hard to understand, a shortage of science journalism education programs and, consequently, a shortage of qualified authors.

LANGUAGE diversity is one the bottlenecks when it comes to promoting scientific knowledge. According to the Constitution, there are 22 regional languages in India. Only 12% of the Indian population can read and write in English, the language traditionally used in science. This means that to develop science communication, scientific content needs to be disseminated in regional languages. Vigyan Prasar is addressing the issue by producing content not only in English and Hindi, but also in other Indian languages (TV science documentaries) or providing subtitles in several languages²² and within the DST initiative of creating science and technical content on Wikipedia in Indian languages.

SCIENCE communication and its development play an important role in stimulating science, technology, and innovation in India. In view of the country's specific features, New Delhi has created a vast body of legislation and an integrated system promoting science communication. The country is confronted by similar challenges when implementing the formulated tasks (its huge population, unequal economic development) and particular problems such as the nation's high illiteracy rate. Even so, thanks to a comprehensive approach and considerable funding, science communication in India is rapidly developing and making an invaluable contribution to the prosperity of the Asian region.

The Third Filling of the GERD: Is There a Way Out of the Impasse?

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Keywords: Ethiopia, Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), hydroelectric power plant, Egypt and Sudan

WITH THE ARRIVAL of summer, the long-running dispute over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), seen as one of the main challenges to stability on the African continent, came back into focus. On June 13, 2022, the president of Egypt said that no one would "touch Egypt's water," indicating a readiness to protect the country's share of Nile River water from encroachments by Ethiopia. Later, he repeated that water is a matter of national security and reiterated his position on protecting Egypt's water rights through a binding agreement. That statement came only a few days after an interview given by GERD Project Manager Kifle Horo, who said that the filling of the dam was an "automatic

process” that could not be stopped. Sudan, along with Egypt, reacted sharply to Horo’s statements, calling them “irresponsible” and condemning Ethiopia for unilateral action.

For more than 10 years now, construction of the GERD has been the main challenge to stability in the Northeast African region. This Ethiopian project, launched in 2011, has raised serious concerns and objections in Egypt and Sudan because of a possible decrease in the Nile water flow. This issue is compounded by the Nile’s limited water resources, which highlights the need for fair water sharing among all users. Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia currently view water scarcity as an “existential threat” that may lead to economic and social disaster. Negotiations between the three countries in search of a compromise on the GERD marked a new stage in their attempts to solve the long-standing issue of the Nile’s water resources, but so far no progress has been made. Today, tensions have risen once again in connection with the third filling of the dam, and this could have unpredictable consequences. The GERD problem relates to several factors that increase the likelihood of armed conflicts.

THE GERD is designed to become the largest hydroelectric dam in the region with a capacity of 6,000 MW and expected power generation of around 15,000 GWh per year, which is 50% more than the annual generation of the Aswan Dam. At present, the construction of the dam is 82% complete,⁵ and the reservoir is being filled. The length of the main dam is 1,800 meters, and its height is 145 meters. A saddle dam built on the northwestern rim of the reservoir is five kilometers long and 50 meters high. The size of the reservoir will be about 150 square kilometers with a total volume of 10 million cubic meters.

ON FEBRUARY 20, 2022, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed attended the opening ceremony of the GERD hydropower plant. At the initial stage, it will generate 700 MW, and when all work is completed, its power generation capacity will increase to 5,150 MW.⁷ This power generation will not only benefit Ethiopia but promote the development of the entire region, which is in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In 2020 and 2021, Ethiopia declared that it had achieved the filling targets, but according to other data, the amount of water stored was actually significantly less.

According to Egypt and Sudan, the planned filling would again be carried out unilaterally without a binding agreement. “The fact that Ethiopia has opened the two drainage gates to the Renaissance Dam means that it intends to begin the third filling in a unilateral move without an agreement or coordination with Egypt and Sudan.”

In the international arena, Egypt finds support among Arab countries: “The Moroccan government has recently voiced its full solidarity with Egypt’s water rights, labeling the [sic] Egyptian water security an integral part of Arab water security.”

Considering that the main obstacle to the resolution of the GERD problem is Ethiopia’s uncompromising stance, in order to understand how the situation might develop in the future, we must look at Ethiopia’s domestic problems, as well as take into account the growing instability in the Horn of Africa.

A PROLONGED ethnic conflict that has been running in Ethiopia’s northernmost region of Tigray since 2020 has not only posed the main challenge to the unity of the state, but has also become a key factor, along with the GERD, determining Ethiopia’s relations with Egypt and Sudan. On one hand, this conflict has fueled nationalist rhetoric (threats and calls for mobilization) in Ethiopia, but on the other, such language has driven Egypt and Sudan to align more closely with each other.

ALTHOUGH Ethiopia is in a much better position than downstream states in terms of water resources, water scarcity in the country is also a pressing problem. Rainfall is variable, and droughts alternate with floods. In 2015 and 2016, Ethiopia was hit by the worst drought in 30 years, due to El Niño. Crop failure and livestock losses led to hunger, with some 10.2 million people driven into food insecurity.

It should also be noted that in a 2021 study, a team of environmentalists from the University of Virginia, Chapman University, and Alexandria University in Egypt concluded that the GERD could worsen drought in periods of low precipitation.

In the context of the GERD project, Ethiopia may choose the strategy of “smoothing things over” and demonstrate a willingness to compromise. This is evident from conciliatory statements by its leadership about the possibility of resuming negotiations. Ethiopia’s willingness to abandon its hard-line stance is emphasized by its more moderate rhetoric on the border conflict compared to that of Sudan.

Ethiopia is unlikely to sign an agreement, let alone stop filling the dam, because that would amount to an ideological defeat. But the filling targets will probably not be achieved, and in the event of negative incidents connected with decreased river flow in Egypt and Sudan, the country will privately express a willingness to compensate for potential damage. At any rate, the GERD will cease to be the main irritant and fade into the background as more urgent regional problems come to the fore.

Toward a Global Convention on Countering the Use of ICTs for Criminal Purposes

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Keywords: cybercrime, Budapest Convention, Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes

THE open-ended Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes held its first session in New York from February 28 to March 11, 2022.

This committee was created on Russia’s initiative – Russia proposed UN General Assembly Resolution 74/247, which was adopted in December 2019, and established the committee. The resolution was co-sponsored by 46 states. General Assembly Resolution 75/282, adopted in May 2021, set guidelines for the committee’s activities.

Russia’s initiative to seek a convention to combat crimes involving the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) was motivated by some obvious facts. One of them was an exponential global increase in financial losses caused by cybercrime, which are estimated to have surged from \$1.5 trillion in 2016 to \$6 trillion in 2021 and are expected to swell to \$9 trillion a year by 2025. These astounding figures are comparable to the gross domestic product of Germany or Japan. At the Ad Hoc Committee’s first session, even grimmer forecasts were made, with estimates that losses might reach \$11 trillion in three years.

So far, the only complete draft of the proposed convention is one written by Russia and submitted by Moscow on July 27, 2021. Despite efforts to bar Russia from talks on the convention, Russia’s consistent line, widely supported by developing countries, steered the committee toward a pragmatic, nonpoliticized course.

The first session highlighted two conceptual divisions between Russia and like-minded nations, on the one hand, and the West, on the other. Western signatories of the Council of Europe’s 2001 Budapest Convention on Cybercrime seek to prioritize human rights aspects of the future global pact over its practical mechanisms.

One can cite numerous examples to support the Russian position. Computers are not an essential means of cyber fraud. Such fraud may be committed using ordinary mobile phones. In that case, fraudsters do not even need the sophistication of the notorious Ukrainian call centers that have been duping Russians into disclosing their bank details and have allegedly extended their activities to some EU countries where there are Russian-speaking communities. There is also smishing or SMS phishing – i.e., fraud through mobile text messaging. This type of fraud is growing rapidly, including in the EU, according to a November 2021 Europol cybercrime report.

During its second session, held in Vienna from May 30 to June 10, 2022, the Ad Hoc Committee had the first reading of the chapters “General Provisions,” “Criminalization,” and “Criminal Procedures and Law Enforcement” of the draft convention.

In the debate on criminalization, Western countries advocated criminalizing a relatively narrow range of acts, effectively insisting on staying within the limits of the Budapest Convention, which criminalizes only nine types of acts. They continued to seek to limit the scope of the future convention to crimes committed using computers.

Russia, like-minded nations, and most developing countries want the future convention to enshrine the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and nonintervention in the internal affairs of states.

Besides the controversies, there were points of convergence at the second session. In one way or another, all committee members advocated collaboration among the law-enforcement authorities of the future signatory states both through legal assistance channels and via proposed 24/7 contact centers. Nor were there any essential disagreements over what should be put in the chapter on general provisions.

Despite divisions among members, a businesslike atmosphere is maintained on the committee. The latter is determined to carry out Resolution 75/282. A lot of meticulous work, primarily on the part of legal experts, will be required to hammer out a harmonized draft of the convention. In Russia, the Foreign Ministry and relevant law-enforcement agencies are involved in this work. At its planned third session in New York from August 29 to September 10, 2022, the committee is to hold the first reading of the other chapters of the draft – “International Cooperation,” “Technical Assistance,” “Measures to Prevent and Combat Offences,” “Convention Implementation Mechanisms,” and “Final Provisions.”

Key Cybersecurity Measures in African Countries

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Keywords: Africa, information and communications technology (ICT), China, African Union (AU), Huawei, European Union (EU), Internet of Things (IoT), smart city

THE SECURITY of the Internet and telecommunications networks has been an increasing national security concern for most nations in recent years, due to the development of 5G and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies, the digitalization of a whole range of governmental and commercial services, the surging popularity of various online services largely because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the mounting scale of cybercrime, including phishing attacks and financial fraud

The comparatively low level of Internet access in African countries (only about 30% of Africans have access to the Internet) and their rapidly growing population attract international information and

communications technology (ICT) players that offer advanced solutions in various economic sectors. Africa is, moreover, the world's second biggest mobile market after Asia. The state sectors of the digitalization markets of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa are estimated to total tens of billions of dollars and are considered an investment Klondike of the next decade.

Aware that ICTs are crucial to future economies, African leaders have set the ambitious goal of connecting even the remotest parts of Africa to the Internet by 2030.

African states have also been setting up pan-continental cybersecurity services. The African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation (Africol) has adopted a cybersecurity strategy for 2020-2024 that aims to help African countries coordinate anti-cybercrime activities.

Computer emergency response teams (CERTs) that cooperate and exchange information in the format of AfricaCERT, a continental CERT forum, are currently operating in 13 African countries. In some countries, CERTs enjoy the status of a national cybersecurity agency, with tasks such as gathering expert resources, raising public awareness about cybersecurity issues, and organizing training sessions.

African and Western entities have joined forces on many cybersecurity initiatives. ECOWAS and the EU are involved in a joint project called Organised Crime: West African Response (OCWAR). It consists of subprojects including OCWAR-M (Organised Crime: West African Response to Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism) and OCWAR-C (West African Response on Cybersecurity and Fight against Cybercrime). OCWAR-C launched in 2019 as a four-year project valued at 7.5 million euros designed to "improve cybersecurity awareness," provide legal advice in order to improve legislation, and organize the training of ICT experts [2]. OCWAR-C's main intermediary achievement was the adoption by the ECOWAS of its own cybersecurity strategy in 2021.

In collaboration with Huawei, African countries have launched smart city projects and safe city programs. The latter involves providing urban law-enforcement services with surveillance equipment. This has brought accusations against China that it is helping African authoritarian regimes violate the right to privacy (Freedom House ranks eight of the 12 countries participating in this program as "partly free" or "not free").

China is running the "Networking Academy" and "Information Networking Academy" digitalization training programs in Africa in cooperation with key African universities. Egypt, Algeria, and Nigeria are among the countries where these programs have been particularly successful.

China's systematically growing presence in Africa has led the West to launch campaigns to discredit the Asian country, accusing Huawei of making unauthorized use of online data processing infrastructure, leading to data leaks. Nevertheless, African countries are continuing to ramp up cooperation with China, taking advantage of Chinese offers of competitive technologies at lower prices.

Africa is an increasingly important element of the global ICT system, but because of the weak political will of most African leaders, African nations still have a long road ahead to achieve adequate cybersecurity standards. African countries still generally lack adequate legal mechanisms to handle new challenges and threats. Africa does not yet have a pan-continental cybersecurity strategy or effective national cybersecurity strategies. There is no effective coordination among institutions involved in cybersecurity activities, and shortages of personnel and financing remain. The desire to solve these problems makes African countries more dependent on outside players but also opens up opportunities for constructive cooperation between African countries and new partners – perhaps even Russia.

Russia and India: Toward the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations

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Keywords: Stalin and India, establishment of diplomatic relations, first ambassador to India Kirill Novikov, Russian-Indian cooperation

RUSSIA and India have a unique, trusting, and mutually beneficial relationship with a rich history of cooperation on politics and strategic planning, economics, energy, military and security, science and technology, culture, humanitarian cooperation, and other issues. Neither the coronavirus pandemic nor the unprecedented pressure on India from the US and its allies in connection with the special military operation launched by Russia in Ukraine on February 24, 2022, could undermine and disrupt them.

It is symbolic that diplomatic relations between our countries were established on April 13, 1947, four months before India officially declared its independence at midnight on August 15 that same year. Since October 2000, Russia and India have been strategic partners. In December 2010, our strategic partnership was elevated to the level of special and privileged.

In Russian scientific and journalistic literature, it is generally accepted that Russia-India relations have been serving as a standard of friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation throughout the entire period of mutual relations between Russia and India, and India and the Soviet Union. Yet all such statements fail to fully reflect the vicissitudes of the many years of dialogue between our countries. Convincing evidence of this is the experience of contacts between the USSR and India at the initial stage of Soviet-Indian relations from the mid-1940s to early 1950s.

Back in 1946-1947, Jawaharlal Nehru, deputy prime minister of the provisional government of India and minister of foreign affairs, sought to establish diplomatic relations with leading foreign countries, including the USSR. He repeatedly expressed a desire to visit Moscow for talks on political issues. However, his attempts met with resistance from the British colonial authorities and the distrust of Moscow, which took a wait-and-see approach and was in no rush to make official contacts with New Delhi.

As head of the Second European Department, Novikov was also involved in the affairs of British India. In fall 1945, with the support of the Soviet Union, India was admitted to the UN. The Soviet Union presumed that as a member of the international organization, India would receive substantial support in its struggle for independence, which proved correct in August 1947. A year prior to that important event, the Soviet Foreign Ministry began to prepare the ground for establishing diplomatic relations with India. Novikov was directly involved in all the preparatory work, so the post of the first ambassador to New Delhi was offered to him. He accepted the offer as a great honor.

The main assignment given to the ambassador by the Foreign Policy Commission was to thoroughly analyze the situation in India and at the same time look for signs of a revolutionary crisis in that country. For obvious reasons, a significant section of the report was devoted to the situation of the working class and peasants and the guiding role of the CPI. To the great disappointment of the Commission members, the ambassador failed to detect a revolutionary situation in India. In his opinion, the speeches of Indian workers and peasants were given exclusively under economic slogans and did not touch on the foundations of the existing system.

In his analysis of the political situation in India, Novikov expressed a number of fundamental considerations that not only differed from Stalin's assessments but directly contradicted them.

There is no doubt that the objectivity, sagacity, integrity, and personal courage demonstrated by Kirill Novikov impressed the members of the Foreign Affairs Commission. Novikov remained the extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador of the USSR to India until 1953. As Novikov presciently wrote in his brief autobiography, "Work was difficult because I was the first ambassador there. It fell to me to establish the embassy's relations with the government, political, economic, party, and cultural circles of India. Gradually, things started to get better. A trade mission was established, which led to the expansion of economic ties between our two countries. A major Soviet industrial exhibition and an exhibition of paintings and culture were organized; an exchange of cultural delegations began. The course for expanding ties with India in every possible way turned out to be the correct one. The current broad political, economic, and cultural ties between our two countries serve as proof. India's heavy industry is growing rapidly. If India continues to adhere to its current course, then it will soon become a great power."

Despite the unfriendly, biased attitude of Stalin and his inner circle toward India, Indian leaders, and the Indian people, the end of the 1940s showed trends in Soviet-Indian relations toward certain rapprochement and the establishment of trade and economic ties. With the direct involvement of the first Soviet ambassador to India, a number of trade agreements were reached between the Soviet Union and India. In exchange for traditional Indian exports, primarily tea, the Soviet Union agreed to supply India with the wheat it needed. This event was preceded by Nehru's unsuccessful visit to the US in 1949 and America's refusal to provide food aid to India.

The reaction of the Soviet government was swift and positive. Moscow ordered the grain to be shipped before the negotiations with New Delhi to come to a close.

During this stage of Russian-Indian diplomatic relations, which coincided with the beginning of the Cold War, despite mutual distrust, personal factors, and the divergent approaches of the heads of government of the two countries, the necessary foundation was laid for the development and enhancement of multifaceted and mutually beneficial cooperation between the peoples of Russia and India.

Christian Orthodox Civilization: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Challenges

Keywords: Orthodox civilization, modern times, spiritual life, religious worldview, priests, deacons

Partenit, Republic of Crimea, October 18, 2021

Nestor, Bishop of Yalta: Starting is always hard, but finishing is even harder, because everything in this world has a beginning but continues into eternity. By starting, I mean taking the first step in trying to understand our reality. It's an extremely complex and convoluted reality – more complex than the Soviet or any other reality. Therefore, our self-identification and self-assertion is our main spiritual and moral task. And this requires intellectual courage and the resolve to maintain one's identity in our rather difficult environment.

As a borderland person by conviction, location, and happenstance, I'm acutely aware of spaces that exist next to my own space. When you're in the center, you feel protected by the provinces, but when you are on the outskirts, you're aware of a vast space on one side and a vast space on the other.

We need to identify ourselves. What's more dangerous? Selfcensorship, self-correction is always a very dangerous thing when in our thoughts and feelings we try to go beyond the obvious and start making leaps.

The mystery of excarnation is a critical phenomenon today. Our civilization is currently performing what can be called an anti-feat of excarnation. All borders are being eliminated, dividing lines between friends and enemies are being erased, and so are dividing lines between light and darkness. This excarnation, dematerialization, dehumanization is taking place unbelievably fast.

Archimandrite Kirion: Much has been written and said already about the harm that the Phanar [i.e., the Ecumenical Patriarch] has done to Christian Orthodoxy as a whole and to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. January 2019 was a black page in the history of our Orthodox Church. That month, unrepentant schismatics and deceivers in holy robes were "accepted into communion," so to speak, by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which cited the Holy Canons as grounds for doing so but in effect trampled on them. One reason why this happened is the nature of our times – a devious and dangerous age where notions and criteria are juggled around and terminology is deliberately confused.

Any issue, even a mundane, practical, or political one, should be considered from this standpoint – namely, what does the Gospel say about it? What has the Lord said about it? Would this bring me closer to Christ or away from Him?

I tend to agree with the numerous church historians who believed that the Code and Novellae of Emperor Justinian led, if not to the merger of Church and state, then to the suppression of the Spirit of Christ and the Church by the imperial state machine and to the dilution of Orthodoxy. That is what we are now seeing in the Phanar, which is obsessed with Pan-Hellenic chauvinism. In Russian history, a replica of the Justinian view of relations between the Church and society brought the Church to a disastrous state during the reign of emperor Peter the Great.

In my view, one of the many, if not main, challenges to Orthodox Christianity in our devious times, as I've said, is the distraction of Christians from our principal goal: Christ and our salvation in Him. This becomes obvious if we follow the criteria I have enumerated – what Christ teaches in the Gospels and how the apostles and early Christians behaved.

The Phanar's lawlessness is obvious to us. Yes, they are acting purely as an office of the US State Department, and not only in Orthodox countries but primarily in the Greek world, where they are trying to assert their prestige and success on the basis of Pan-Hellenism and the supposed status of universality. But this would be impossible or at least rather difficult if they and their followers didn't have a confused and distorted vision of the goal of Christian existence, of the Spirit of Christ, and of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. If we fail to see this challenge, there will be no guarantee that we won't suffer the same plight: Are we moving toward Christ or away from Him?

Armen Oganessian: In 1948, an Eastern Orthodox episcopal conference was held. After that, Zhurnal Moskovskoy Patriarkhii [Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate] published an article by Archbishop Germogen of Kazan. This is how St. Luka Voyno-Yasenetsky reacted to it: "Why did they need to bring together the dirtiest, most negative things about the Roman Church? Is there nothing virtuous or positive [about it]? Have there been no miracles? Are there no saints? Is there nothing to the Catholic Church other than the Pope and the cardinals, nothing other than the Vatican, whose policies we all do not accept? Doesn't the Catholic Church consist of millions of ordinary people with pure and virtuous hearts? Why poison them with Germogen's articles?" This is actually a debatable position, though there's much about it that's similar to what Father Makary said. I think that St. Luka meant that there had been miracles and saints in the Roman Church before the schism. I can't, for example, consider Francis of Assisi a saint. Our theologians have written a great deal about such ecstatic perceptions of miracles. It's a complicated subject, it needs analyzing. But the Lord cares for everyone. We mustn't

reject an ordinary Catholic or Protestant and regard them as enemies unless they vilify our Church or try to proselytize. I'm not being dogmatic. It's a very complicated issue.

Bishop Nestor: We must distinguish between an enemy of God and a personal enemy. Your personal enemy points out your own shortcomings, while God's enemy is very tactful, polite, and outwardly considerate but at the same time is altering the "infrastructure" of your personality, as it were.

It might be a good idea to restore the rite of anathematization during the first week of Lent. I always had it at my church. I had a protodeacon who performed it. That rite made a powerful impression even on those who didn't come to church too often. The Triumph of Orthodoxy service is incomplete without it.

Father Dimitry, Dean of the Church of the Protection of the Theotokos of the mission of the Luzhetsky Monastery of the Nativity of the Theotokos and St. Therapont in Mozhaysk: Unlike the person without the Spirit, who lives outside the Church, the person with the Spirit makes judgements about everything in a spiritual way – that is to say, in the way the Holy Spirit has taught him. Such a person reasons, makes comparisons, and draws conclusions. Today, we are required to be very attentive – and above all, to have a spiritual attitude toward all world phenomena and processes.

Everything having to do with a person's life, place in society, freedom, and especially the soul, has a theological and spiritual dimension. We will be told that there are purely political matters, medical matters, and matters pertaining to any other science or technological progress, and that they have no theological basis.

That assertion is fundamentally wrong. Is apostolic service to the Church separate from real life? I believe it is unacceptable to argue that theology is separate from the contemporary life of people.

Only when we realize that it is not just a new but an anti-Christian world order that is being built before our eyes will we be able to see the essence of many destructive trends. Only then will we realize that it is a war against human nature, which contains an image of God.

Mass media, television, and the Internet play key roles in these destructive processes. John Coleman, a former intelligence officer, proves convincingly in his book *The Conspirators' Hierarchy: The Story of the Committee of 300* that this neoculture would never have taken root had there not been a careful plan to launch this destructive trend. A society that has lost its faith in God and, consequently, its human dignity is increasingly enslaved by the propagators of sin.

A child who grows up reading comic books and playing computer games, a child whose brain is not developing normally, a child who knows nothing about serious literature, classical music, or works by the best artists, cannot resist the diktat of artificial intelligence.

We see mass media, especially Western media, offer one-sided coverage of political and social developments. We see mounds of dirt and lies being heaped on serious scientists, politicians, and public and cultural figures who hold religious views and viewpoints that differ from those of the majority.

It's becoming clear that, for most people, the system of mass information and communication is not so much a source of information and a source of obtaining a picture of the world as it is the author of this picture – an author that is aggressively trying to program people's thinking and behavior.

The purpose of transhumanism is to create a "new" human being, a post-humankind – human beings who would never be ill, would get closer and closer to perfection, and who would eventually achieve physical immortality. Transhumanism is a result of the last three centuries, a period when people have come to seriously believe in the myth of evolution and progress, with the main idea being to liberate humankind from all its limitations. This began with a struggle against religion and related traditions, and then a struggle against the class-based state system in favor of civil society.

Today, most people are unwilling to become genetically modified cyborgs, but, as we know from history, nobody would ask this majority – it's the elites who shape history. Transhumanism will be our inevitable tomorrow unless we come to realize its catastrophic danger and change our present by returning to our traditional forms of existence.

The main and essential difference between Orthodox Christianity and, say, Catholicism, is that, in the changing world, Orthodoxy safeguards the Christian faith in its unchanged purity, while Catholicism with its Jesuitical worldview tries to adjust the Christian faith to the constantly changing world.

It is sad if there is discord in a family, when personal ambitions or grievances win out over love. But it is far worse when there is discord in the family of Orthodox churches.

Russian history offers some of the best examples of cooperation between Church and state. They include the blessing to fight a battle against the Mongol-Tatar army given to Grand Duke Dmitry Donskoy by St. Sergy of Radonezh, the hegumen of the Trinity Monastery, and his foretelling of victory in it; the role of the same monastery in rebuffing the Polish invasion and in fighting against False Dmitry; and fundraising by the Church for the Dimitry Donskoy tank unit during the Great Patriotic War.

But our history also includes tragic instances of state interference in Church life. The first large-scale instance of this were the reforms of the Church structure by Tsar Peter the Great and the start of the so-called synodal period, which lasted more than 200 years, from 1700 to 1918. Peter I brought the Church under his own control by creating a Church administration that essentially followed the Protestant model. This was an attempt by earthly authority to bring heavenly authority under its control.

We need spiritual reasoning to safeguard Orthodox civilization and its unity, and the collective mind of the one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church gives us the basis for such reasoning.

“No Stranger Had to Spend the Night on the Street, for I Opened My Door to the Traveler”

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Keywords: Byurobin, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, Great Patriotic War, Moscow conferences, Yalta Conference

GENEROSITY and concern for foreign counterparts have always been hallmarks of Russian diplomats. In no other country have members of the diplomatic corps and official delegations been given so much attention and been received with such splendor and truly imperial grandeur. The traditions of hospitality passed down through the generations were fully inherited and developed by the Soviet foreign policy service. And it never deviated from those traditions.

Even in the most difficult and lean years of the Great Patriotic War, when Soviet citizens were kept on bare survival rations to save resources for the state, nothing was spared for foreigners. All available means and resources were used to maintain high prestige, to demonstrate the potential and capabilities of the state. This article will examine several striking historical episodes that illustrate that point.

Bomb shelters were also set up at the dachas around Moscow obligatorily provided by the Soviet side at the request of diplomats and where employees of foreign missions went in the summer. For example, the US Embassy was allocated over a hectare of land in the village of Tarasovka with a large house, a kitchen, a sauna, and a house for servants.

When the shelters were being organized, all the wishes of foreign diplomats were heeded.

It would seem that every possible detail had been meticulously worked out, but Molochkov, despite all the measures taken by the NKID, expressed concern in his report that the shelters at the embassies might still not be reliable enough and suggested that after the end of the summer dacha season, separate shelters for the diplomatic corps at the Moskva Hotel be arranged for and equipped in the most befitting manner, even with a buffet.

But things were completely different at our embassy in London, which, like Moscow, was being bombed by German aircraft. Our diplomats were left to their own devices when it came to their physical safety in wartime conditions. And this whole set of problems had to be solved without support from the host country. A bomb shelter was prepared and equipped by our diplomats on their own, and the British side did not provide any country residences for them at all.

Since all the immediate surrounding areas were occupied by Londoners who went there to spend nights in safety, our ambassador's attempts to find a country residence were unsuccessful.

Employees of foreign diplomatic missions and their family members bought food through the orders department (stol zakazov) of Gastronom No. 1 not with ration cards but based on lists certified by the NKID Protocol Department. Meanwhile, Soviet citizens employed at the embassies received general cards from the Moscow City Bureau for Food and Manufactured Goods Cards, as did all NKID employees. The essential food ration for foreigners was also larger.

To the credit of the foreign diplomats, it is worth noting that not all of them took this care for granted or indifferently. Some even tried to help Soviet citizens affected by the war to the best of their ability. For example, the diplomats' wives set up a special committee to oversee the Kuybyshev orphanage, where orphans were evacuated from besieged Leningrad. The funds collected by the members of foreign missions were used to purchase the most necessary children's clothes.

The first Allied delegation, which included British Minister of Supply Lord Beaverbrook (William Maxwell Aitken) and special envoy of the US president Averell Harriman, arrived on September 29, 1941, to participate in a conference on reciprocal deliveries of supplies needed to fight Nazi Germany. The work lasted four days, and at the end, Stalin hosted a lavish banquet in the Catherine Hall of the Kremlin Palace for more than a hundred attendees that included, besides Beaverbrook and Harriman, all support personnel, the embassies' staff, the crews of the B-24 bombers who flew the delegations to Moscow, and several dozen Soviet officials.

Harriman noted the striking contrast between the Kremlin and 10 Downing Street. He wrote: "Churchill was always careful to conform to the British rations, whereas the tables of the Russian officials were groaning with all kinds of delectable foods and the people were hungry. This became increasingly apparent in 1942 and 1943. I thought it was disgusting."

Perhaps, in addition to demonstrating the power and resources of the state, such service and attempts to amaze the guests, excessive at times, partially compensated for the intrusive scrutiny that all foreigners were subjected to and the restrictions that ruled out free communication in town that led many Western colleagues to feel as if they were living inside a fence. Foreigners had practically no chance to see real life in the USSR. They socialized mainly with each other, and in exceptional cases – with a few members of the Soviet establishment and bohemians selected and vetted by the NKVD (sometimes by Beria personally).

On one hand, foreign diplomats were fully provided with everything. The Soviet state took care of their personal safety. Unique, maximally comfortable, and "sheltered" conditions were created for them. Given that the country's resources were severely limited, it would not be wrong to say that this was

done at the expense of Soviet citizens – their places in bomb shelters and bunkers, their food, and finally, their labor.

On the other hand, such care created an insurmountable wall between foreign diplomats and ordinary Soviet people. Surrounded by the gloss of high officialdom, foreigners did not see real life in the USSR. Exceptions were very rare. And our fellow citizens looked on foreigners as if they were aliens from another planet.

And yet, thanks to the efforts of the Soviet state, no foreign diplomat who left at least some mark in history said, could say, or had any moral right to say that they had been received poorly and treated without due respect in the Soviet Union.

Averell Harriman: Oligarch in the Diplomatic Service (Part 2)

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Keywords: Averell Harriman, Lend-Lease, second front

ON AUGUST 1942, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and US special envoy Averell Harriman left the Soviet Union, basking in what seemed to them a great political victory. Stalin had agreed, albeit grudgingly, to their decision to postpone the opening of the second front until 1943. In other words, he had accepted their obvious political perfidy that would prolong the war and cost many millions of Soviet lives. The Soviet leader, however, had not broken off allied relations, a step that [London and Washington] feared more than anything else. He was obviously determined to fight until the enemy was routed. The Soviet Union had no other option: To survive, it had to continue fighting with all available resources.

That was what the Western members of the anti-Hitler coalition wanted.

The Soviet side knew that and had no illusions. Ivan Maisky, the Soviet Ambassador in London, was especially outspoken: “Russia was needed as an ally against Hitler. At the same time, Russia is dangerous: If it becomes much stronger after the war, it might push the British Empire into a quandary – not as a conqueror of its territories but as a powerful moral and political factor contributing to its inner disintegration.”

To keep the Soviet “boxer” in the ring to keep wearing down the enemy, Averell Harriman, throughout the latter half of 1942, lobbied for support of the Soviet Union and prompt deliveries of strategically important supplies such as aluminum, nickel, trucks, tanks, medical equipment, and food. He spared no effort to convince the American establishment that Soviet Russia had unleashed a total war in the true sense of the word and was determined to achieve victory at any cost.

Ivan Maisky wrote in his memoirs: “At the turn of 1943, the world became aware, for the first time, of new, fresh winds. The great battle on the Volga was still being waged when the nightmarish mists of fascist domination began to lift. The roads and routes toward liberation from Hitler’s slavery became clearer. Peoples raised their heads. . . . During these 12 months, we have been measuring our strength with the enemy. We became aware of their force and began to sense our own; we compared our forces and became firmly convinced that we were stronger.”

On January 24, at the final press conference, Roosevelt stunned journalists by saying he would insist on Germany's unconditional surrender. The US president was probably hoping to send a positive signal to Stalin, who did not attend the conference: The Allies were not contemplating separate talks with Germany. No compromises with the Nazis, who had launched the aggressive war, were possible.

Averell was convinced that the president's decision was a mistake that would narrow the space of future negotiations for the German political elite and likely "stiffen the resistance of the Germans."⁸ Roosevelt, however, never backed down from his position.

Harriman later wrote that, on the one hand, "I did not want to leave London. I had just seen what a hopelessly restricted life the foreign diplomats led in Moscow, the way they were fenced in.... I recognized that in Moscow I would be at the end of the line, probably losing such value as I had in London." History proved him wrong.

On the other hand, he knew that the future of humanity was now being decided on Soviet territory and that it would be in the interests of his country to take an active part in the process. Fate gave America a unique chance to profit from its relations with the Soviets and to achieve a breakthrough that would determine the course of world history. The potential dividends were much more attractive than the routine in London.

Overall, Harriman agreed with the president: The struggle against a common enemy had brought the US and the USSR closer together. It was a good foundation for continued postwar cooperation. The spirit of cooperation was expected to help build a new model of the world.¹⁹ In view of the immense destruction it had suffered, the Soviet Union badly needed resources and support for postwar reconstruction far more than military supplies. This could be profitable to America.

Molotov received Harriman on October 21 even before the presentation of his credentials. Commenting on why Roosevelt had appointed him and why he had such broad powers on both political and military matters, the American ambassador cited his rich experience organizing interstate cooperation in wartime and mentioned his long work as Roosevelt's personal representative in charge of aid and military supplies to Great Britain.

By the end of 1943, quite a few problems had already mounted up. For example, from the very beginning of Lend-Lease, Roosevelt did not require the Soviet Union to first submit either calculations of the types of goods and raw materials it needed or reports on how Moscow used what it received – i.e., reveal its economic indices. Harriman firmly opposed that approach: Giving Moscow everything it asked for was not the best method of dealing with the Soviet Union. But all attempts to persuade the president and Hopkins to examine the needs of the Soviet side more closely failed.

The Soviet Union, however, politely and diplomatically refused to supply Soviet "commentaries to American propaganda addressed to peoples of the occupied countries of Europe and in enemy ranks," saying that the issue "required further study." In other words, the Soviet government was refusing, and with good reason, to rebroadcast and promote American propaganda in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union responded positively to all other issues raised in Harriman's letter⁴⁹ with the aim of "invigorating exchange of published information between the Soviet Union and the United States" in order to "cement relations between our two countries."

Harriman, however, was not quite satisfied with how work with the Soviet side was progressing. He was convinced that the highly inefficient Soviet bureaucracy was responsible for delays and the inability to reach concrete decisions.

Back in 1943, Maisky wrote about the Soviet strategy: "Today it is very important that in the process of crushing the enemy we not overstrain ourselves and reach the finish line in a state of complete exhaustion. This requires skillful maneuvering on the battlefield and in the field of diplomacy." By spring

1944, it had become abundantly clear that the country was coping with this task. By the end of March, the Red Army had crossed the Prut River and the Soviet border and was pursuing the retreating enemy. Soviet industry was reliably covering military needs, maintaining confident superiority over the enemy even despite huge losses.

Churchill sided with Stalin on the border issue, saying that Russia had paid with huge losses for Poland's liberation and had the right to insist on the Curzon Line. In addition, the Allies had unanimously agreed to recompense Polish territorial losses with parts of Eastern Prussia and Silesia.

The Soviet Union was building up a sphere of exclusive influence in Central and Eastern Europe⁷⁴ – Poland being a prime example. In the Soviet understanding, a “friendly government” is one that is controlled manually and ensures the absolute political, military, and economic dominance of the USSR.⁷⁵ Harriman wrote: “What frightens me, however, is that when a country begins to extend its influence by strong-arm methods beyond its borders under the guise of security it is difficult to see how a line can be drawn. If the policy is accepted that the Soviet Union has the right to penetrate her immediate neighbors for security, penetration of the next immediate neighbor becomes at a certain time equally logical.”

America's relations with the Soviet Union were gradually moving toward containment. Averell Harriman would play one of the main roles in the process – in fact, he inspired it and became its “godfather.”

The Russian Orthodox Church as a Guarantor of Unity of the Russian World in the Baltics

A study of the Diplomatic Activity of Archbishop John Pommers

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Keywords: Archbishop John (Pommers), ROC, LOC, Russian World

TODAY, our compatriots in Latvia, as well as throughout the Baltic region, have to fight for the right to be Russian. The Russian language and the status of Russian speakers are among the most controversial issues in Latvia. Russophobia has become a key element of Latvian politics.

Historical lessons should serve as the basis of modern diplomatic relations. The key to this problem was found and the solution was successfully accomplished back in the 1920s by the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). In the 1920s and 1930s, the Latvian Orthodox Church (LOC), as represented by its head, Archbishop John (Pommers), who was also a deputy of the Latvian Saeima [parliament], acted as a guarantor of the unity of the Russian world

In 1921, His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon supported the Latvian flock by sending the ROC's only ethnic Latvian to Latvia. Archbishop John (Pommers) of Penza and Saransk, who had successfully stood up to the first religious schism (the “Putyata revolt”) supported by the Soviet government in Penza, became head of the Latvian Church.

Archbishop John faced the challenging tasks of preserving canonical ties with the ROC and legitimizing the Church in a nation state.

Following the creation of the Latvian state, [ethnic] Russians, who made up the core of the Latvian Church, had the status of an ethnic minority: They were divided, politically passive, and lacked ideological unity. Therefore, during the work of the Constitutional Assembly, there were no representatives of the Russian minority in any of the governments.

By the end of the First Saeima, Russians were unable to mount any constructive opposition to rising Latvian nationalism and were losing ground. During the First Saeima, it became clear that there was no one in the Russian community who could be put forward as a representative of Russian interests. There was no one with an established political track record, name recognition, or popular slogans, which made the Russian community nervous amid calls to forge an alliance with Jews. But that did not happen.

Being a vibrant religious figure, a diplomat, bilingual (Russian and Latvian), and a brilliant orator, Archbishop John made the unprecedented decision to run for the Saeima to protect the interests of Orthodoxy and therefore the interests of the Russian World.

Following his election to the Second Saeima (October 3-4, 1925), Archbishop John clearly emerged as the most vibrant figure among Russian parliamentarians, proclaiming the protection of the interests of the Orthodox Church and the Russian minority as his principal goal. He also advocated the pooling of efforts of ethnic minorities in upholding their rights.

Archbishop John never divided Orthodox parishes on ethnic grounds, leading all of Latvia's Orthodox believers. Being an ethnic Latvian, he always defended the interests of ethnic minorities very fervently and tactfully. His main slogan was tolerance and harmony in relations between ethnic Russians and Latvians based on Orthodox Christianity. In effect creating a confessional political bloc, he realized that it was the only right decision in order to protect the rights of the Russian minority and the rights of the Church.

The top priority was to protect the rights of ethnic Russians – the right to use the Russian language and to receive education in Russian. The Russian school in independent Latvia entered a new stage of development. It turned from a dominant one into a school for one of the minority groups cut off from their ethnic motherland.

Archbishop John (Pommers) was a vibrant political figure, a deputy of three Saeimas who worked hard to unify Russian forces. Thanks to the LOC's diplomatic policy to reconcile the Latvian and Russian flock, a bloc of Orthodox and Russian parties was created in the Third Saeima. Bishop John made strong conciliatory gestures toward Latvian believers, translating liturgical books into Latvian, establishing Latvian parishes, and regularly delivering sermons in Latvian. That laid the groundwork for the creation of a harmonious society: Ethnic disagreements were ironed out thanks to the unity of spiritual goals.

The situation in the LOC and in the Baltic region as a whole, as well as the geopolitical processes and role of the Constantinople Patriarchate, are largely the same today.

The interests of Latvia's Russian-speaking population is currently expressed by the Harmony party, which on October 6, 2018, won 20% of the vote in the election to the Saeima. But once again it proved unable to form a ruling coalition, since the other parties refused to cooperate with it over the dominance of nationalist interests. Neither liberal ideology nor leftist ideas have ever had a solid political or institutional basis in Latvian society.

Today, about 350,000 Orthodox Christians live in Latvia. Latvian parishes are few in number, but they have a stable composition of parishioners. In the Soviet days and during the first years of independence, a qualitative selection took place among Orthodox Latvians, as a result of which only people strong in their faith remained. Most Orthodox Christian parishioners in the Baltic countries are members of the Russian-speaking diaspora.

As for the presence of a religious figure in politics, it is justified in specific historical circumstances. The goal – i.e., the protection of Christian Orthodoxy and ideology – is powerful, overriding, and stimulates the consolidation of disparate Russian forces in the interest of cooperation and harmony with ethnic groups forming the majority in limitrophe states.

The identity of Russians as part of the Russian World is beginning to revive in the Baltic countries. The Russian Orthodox Church has every reason to become the guarantor of its unity.

The Ottoman Empire and the Funj Sultanate From the 16th to the 18th Centuries

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Keywords: Ottoman Empire, Funj Sultanate, 16th-18th centuries, sultanate in Sennar, Suakin, eyalet of Habeş, Sudan, Selman Reis, Evliya Çelebi

AFTER THE FALL of the Mamluk Sultanate in Egypt, the most powerful states of Northeast Africa at the beginning of the 16th century included the Ottoman Empire, the funj sultanate,¹ the Adal sultanate, and Ethiopia.

The funj sultanate took shape in 1504 on territory now occupied by Sudan. Based at Sennar on the shores of the Blue Nile River, it controlled all trade and pilgrimage routes. Its direct power stretched to Dongola in the north, and in the eastern part of Sudan, it collected tribute from the lands of the Beja people. Thus, the Nile Valley, earlier the space of Christian states, was gradually Islamized. Having increased its territory at the expense of the territories of the former Mamluk Sultanate, the Ottoman Empire became a northern neighbor of the funj sultanate even if separated from it by sparsely populated desert territories.

The funj sultanate was first mentioned by naval commander Selman Reis in his report of 1525 about the Red Sea and Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. In the final part of his report, he set out some proposals for the implementation of conquests and gave them an economic and military justification. Among other things, he proposed subjugating the funj sultanate: This relatively cheap military operation would give the Ottoman Empire control over territories rich in mineral resources and various exotic goods. In his report, Reis dismissed Amara Dunqas, the sultanate's founder (1504/1505-1533/1534) as a "black slave."

Soon, however, the sultanate attracted attention. Arab tribes connected with the funj sultanate refused to recognize control of the Ottoman Empire; they attacked the Suakin area and even besieged the capital of the eyalet.

Evliya Çelebi, a prominent Ottoman traveler, left us his description of fortresses built to protect the water sources on the mainland to the southeast of the Suakin Island: "If there were no towers the Black would have given Suakin no water and the city would have died of thirst" [7, p. 448; 12, pp. 249-250]. "The towers were known as Taş Kale, 'Stone Castle,' Orta Kale, 'Middle Castle,' and Boğaz Kale, 'Straits Castle,' and although they were old (presumably the sixteenth century constructions were still intact) they are described as 'in very good condition' (gayet ma'murdur), and furnished with artillery pieces" [17, p. 40].

Sudanese historian Kaysar Musa Zeyn comments that the attacks at Suakin described in Ottoman sources could be correlated with activities of the tribal union al-Abdallab, headed by Sheikh Ajib al-Nahjaluk at the height of his powers; he ruled all tribes living in the lands surrounding Suakin [6, pp. 313-314].

The al-Abdallab tribal union that ruled the northern part of the sultanate in Sennar could pose a serious threat to Ottoman control of the northern part of the eyalet of Habeş. At the same time, it got grain, a very important resource, through the “rioters of the land of funj” in exchange for cotton cloth. The attacks described above could have been used to pressure the local Ottoman administration to achieve certain preferences [15, pp. 200, 202].

The plans to squeeze the Ottoman Empire out of the territory of contemporary Sudan coincided with the rule of Sultan Daur (1585/86- 1587/88). In fact, at that time, Ethiopia and the sultanate formed a strategic union. To prevent an attack of the funj, the beylerbey of the eyalet of Habeş, who relied on his widely spread and active network of agents in the countries that border on his possessions, sent sanjak-bey Ariko Yusuf and an armed detachment to Suakin. He turned to Egypt for help, which should have included 150 nefers, 200 rifles, 200 sabers, gunpowder and other military equipment. The march never took place because of quarrels between the sultan and his uncles [15, p. 65].

The situation was different in the Nile Valley, where the Ottoman Empire organized several expeditions from Egypt. Fortress Sai on an island between the Second and Third Cataracts of the Nile became the southernmost point of its possessions.

The Ottomans never abandoned their attempts to move further along the Valley.

In the 17th century, growing domestic problems forced the Ottomans to abandon their planned African conquests. The Habeş Province did not disappear, but it was rarely mentioned in documents of the 17th century.

The countries developed trade contacts: Sennar was connected by caravan routes with Ottoman Egypt and the eyalet of Habeş. The sultanate supplied resin and slaves taken from the Ethiopian and Darfur tribes; Dongola sold horses. The sultanate in Sennar was one of the sources of foodstuffs for Suakin, as the latter’s climate made agriculture impossible. Cotton cloth moved in the opposite direction from the Ottoman Empire to the sultanate. Trade was conducted by barter.

The funj sultanate reached its peak in the 17th century and was gradually opening up to foreign influence. Sennar with its fairly big settlements of foreign merchants became a cosmopolitan city; the funj sultans tried to modernize the army by importing small firearms and cannons. Ottoman Egypt and the eyalet of Habeş became channels through which information about the latest developments of armies and technologies reached the sultanate.

By the 17th century, the funj sultanate had come to see the Ottoman Empire not as a potential adversary but as a source of military technologies and religious legitimacy, despite different madhhabs. In a well-known incident, one of the greatest Sudanese Sheikhs Idris vad al-Arbaba asked Sheikh Ali al-Adjuri, a prominent Egyptian theologian, to explain to him the ban on tobacco smoking. The theologian disagreed with Sheikh Idris yet expressed his respect and acknowledged his merits by presenting him with a spearhead (al-Ajhuriya) and clothes [2, p. 21].

The Ottoman Empire, for its part, softened, to a great extent, its attitude toward the sultanate: Suakin became its main port; there was regular communication between Cairo and Sennar.

In summary, it should be said that from the 16th to the 18th centuries, the Ottoman Empire failed to adopt a clear political course in relations with the funj sultanate. On the whole, despite the fairly big distances that separated Northeastern Africa and the Ottoman Empire, local policies directly depended

on the state of affairs in Istanbul. There were several surges in the Empire's activity in the Red Sea basin from 1525 to 1528, from 1555 to 1558, and in the 1580s. The first period is associated with Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire Ibrahim Pasha and the struggle for control over the trade routes from India across the Red Sea. Under Grand Vizier Rüstem Pasha (1544-1553; 1555-1561), the Ottoman Empire made practically no efforts to spread in this direction. The eyalet of Habeş appeared under Grand Vizier Kara Ahmed Pasha (1553-1555). The last period of the Ottoman Empire's aggressiveness in the region coincided with the time when an influential group at the court of the sultan supported eastward expansion. This activity in East Africa was probably motivated by a desire to revenge the defeat at Addis-Karo that the Ottoman Empire suffered from Ethiopia in 1579. Late in the 16th century, the Ottoman Empire abandoned its previous expansion in the region and established contacts with neighboring states. Until the end of the 18th century, the nature of relations with the funj sultanate remained the same: The Ottomans no longer planned expansions.

The Ottoman Empire lost interest in regional expansions as the funj sultanate grew stronger. It reached the height of its might in the late 17th century, after which it declined and fell apart. That period of the sultanate is marked by the exacerbation of the conflict with neighboring Ethiopia and attempts to expand to the southwest.

Latin America Through the Lens of Sustainable Development

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Keywords: Latin America, sustainable development, environmental protection, energy, social and political prospects

ONE OF THE most significant events in Russian social sciences in the past few years was the publication of *Prospects for Sustainable Development: Appealing to Global and Latin American Realities* [in Russian],* a collective monograph published under the general editorial supervision of Vladimir Davydov, associate member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The book looks at the situation in Latin America through the lens of the sustainable development concept and outlines economic, social, and political prospects for the region.

The monograph opens with a fascinating philosophical discourse about sustainable development being crucial to the future of humankind. This introductory section contains a systemic, dialectical, comparative, and holistic explanation of the sustainable development concept and its significance for the entire world and for Latin America. The concluding part of Chapter 1 sets the tone for the entire monograph. It stresses that "development will become sustainable if it is economically balanced, socially inclusive and balanced, environmentally responsible, biologically safe, and, finally, institutionally designed to advance the interests of the majority and protect the rights of minorities."

Chapter 2 lists the sustainable development goals (SDGs) as proclaimed in Agenda 2030 and confirmed in the Paris Agreement – the two fundamental documents on sustainable development – and analyzes risks posed by climate cataclysms that have been taking place in Latin America and other regions. Subsequent chapters cite examples of attitudes toward the SDGs in some Latin American countries while emphasizing the universality of the impact of ongoing changes in nature.

Chapter 4 looks at the odds of the Latin American countries achieving Goal 7 of Agenda 2030 – ensuring "access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all." It focuses on the transition to renewable energy and the problems Latin America faces in this regard.

The book's detailed analysis of these problems leads to the indisputable conclusion that "sustainable world economic growth will be possible when financial regulators, including central banks and other bodies, clamp down on destabilizing operations and bring financial systems back to their socially useful functions, stimulating productive investment."

Section III discusses in detail social and political obstacles in Latin America to achieving the SDGs, including weak social policies; migration; corruption; organized crime; and economic, political, social, and cultural disparities. The section explores the effects of social policies on the implementation of the SDGs.

The book asserts that the social policies the Latin American countries adopted in the early 21st century, including state support for young people and the elderly, have failed to solve problems that have been accumulating for decades. Most notably, these policies have failed to launch an irreversible poverty reduction process and significantly reduce "multifactorial inequality." The next part of the book uses rich factual material to delve into the problems of corruption and organized crime, including drug trafficking, in Latin American countries – problems that pose a tremendous threat to them.

Latin America's relations with the European Union are the theme of Chapter 15. The chapter pays a lot of attention to global sustainable development initiatives by the EU and examines political and economic interaction between the EU and Latin America, concluding that the EU "is an important source of capital to enable Latin American industry to seek sustainable development and raise the technological development level."

Chapter 17 deals with Russia's involvement in Latin America and claims that the "rapprochement between Russia and Latin American countries in the initial decades of the current century was triggered by mutual economic complementarity and the desire of each side to diversify its foreign relations."

The final chapter, Chapter 20, analyzes the participation of Latin American countries in global governance and describes attempts by them to use global governance institutions as channels for achieving SDGs.

The Conclusion sums up the main points of the monograph. "Our general conclusion is that the Latin American countries will fail to achieve most of the targets set for 2030."

The points made in the Conclusion prove the novelty and significance of the monograph. The book does more than cite specific facts to illustrate the sustainable development concept; it gives the reader an idea of key problems of social development in Latin American countries through the lens of sustainable development principles.

Pioneers of Soviet Diplomacy: Their Life and Work

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Keywords: diplomat, education, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID), professional, history, sociologists

IN A PROJECT overseen by the Association of Russian Diplomats, Russian career diplomat minister counselor second class Yury Ivanov has published a book titled *The First Soviet Diplomats: The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR/USSR (1917-1941)* [in Russian] that is in effect a follow-up to his encyclopedic work published in 2021 about the last diplomats of the Russian Empire.¹ There has been increasing public interest in Russia lately in the life and work of various diplomats, as evidenced by the appearance of several historical and biographical publications on the subject.

The First Soviet Diplomats contains biographical data on more than 1,700 people who served in the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID) of Soviet Russia and subsequently the NKID of the Soviet Union between the October Revolution and the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War. It also provides information on the post-1941 life and work of some of the diplomats. The book is the first collection of encyclopedic information about Soviet diplomats who were active in that period. It is a set of concise descriptions of not only the career achievements of the diplomats but also their lives. Ivanov provides more details about some diplomats than others, but usually he states their birth and death dates, social background, ethnicity (this is stated only if it was clearly indicated in his source) and diplomatic rank. He indicates whether they were a member of the Communist Party, what education they had, what academic degrees they held, what posts they occupied, whether they served in the military, what foreign languages they spoke, what awards they received, and what works they published. There is also information about their families.

The names of many diplomats were undoubtedly left out of the book due to high employee turnover in that difficult time of building the diplomatic service of the young Soviet state and due to a lack of information, so ample opportunities remain for further archival searches.

Ivanov's book is a unique narrative about a whole generation of diplomats, including people's commissars and ministers from Georgy Chicherin to Andrey Gromyko and the rank and file.

The book has a reference section that consists of notes with general information such as data on historical events, international conferences, political parties, and nongovernmental organizations, as well as addenda that include an index of geographical names, a subject index, an index of personal names, and a bibliographical list of sources, including memoirs of diplomats.

Most former diplomats of the Russian Empire refused to work for the Soviet state, and this forced the latter to build its diplomatic service practically from scratch. The reference section contains a list of tsarist diplomats who agreed to work at the NKID of the RSFSR/USSR and a list of Soviet diplomats who defected abroad between 1917 and 1941.

Because of shortages of diplomats in the NKID's early years, some personnel had to be recruited from outside the diplomatic profession. Usually they were members of the Bolshevik party who were good organizers and had political experience and the requisite knowledge for diplomatic work. Some of them had spent years in emigration in various countries, during which time they accumulated knowledge about those countries, learned foreign languages, built useful ties, received education at European universities, and took part in the international labor movement.

One objective of the NKID was to create a professional development system for diplomats. Ivanov says that NKID personnel were educated through four channels: self-education through work in the state service; education received at European universities during emigration; nonspecialized higher education received in Russia and the USSR (for example, at Moscow University, the Institute of Oriental Studies, St. Petersburg University, or Kiev University); and specialized diplomatic training at facilities ranging from a school organized in 1920 to train auxiliary diplomatic personnel, to the Institute for the Training of Diplomatic and Consular Personnel, set up in 1934 as part of the NKID system to provide two-year training (renamed the Higher Diplomatic School in 1939). The creation of the institute reflected the importance attached to professional diplomatic training.

Among other things, Ivanov's personal profiles of diplomats tell us about the frequency of the opening of diplomatic missions by the Soviet state and their geography, about Moscow's prioritization of relations with certain countries, and about the continuity of the foreign policy of the Russian Empire and of the Soviet state.

The First Soviet Diplomats will be valuable to historians and to sociologists studying the recruitment of members of various ethnic and social groups into diplomatic services; facilities for diplomatic training; the career trajectory of various diplomats; the sources of the Soviet political elite; and the status, political, and cultural capital and reputational resources of the diplomatic profession.

The target readership of the book, which is effectively a history of the diplomatic service of the young Soviet state, are current and veteran diplomats. The book is also useful as teaching material for courses on Russia's early 20th-century social and political history and would be of interest to a wide range of readers curious about the history of our country.

The Commonality of Principles of Education: International Experience and National Priorities

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Keywords: Bologna system, UNESCO, improvement of Russian education

THE ORIGIN and current state of worldwide educational systems are laid out in the pages of the monograph *International Standards of Education: Lessons of History and Modernity*, produced by a team of authors under the editorship of Y.A. Goryachev and published by Etnosfera in 2022 [in Russian].

An appealing feature of the present study is an expansive historical excursus on the formation of cognitive systems and their impact on public education. Looking back through this lens over the centuries, the authors provide an opportunity for critical analysis of the sources of modern conflicts in interethnic and international relations, which are tightly interlaced with a comprehension of the sense and problems of education in the modern world.

Even though external trends of development in the field of education are positive, the unwavering constant of "progress" in education has recently been significantly undermined. This is a result of educational principles that were crafted during the transition to a globalized world and have been codified in international legal documents, both bilateral and multilateral. These principles are accepted by default as truths and have never undergone a critical review from the standpoint of their influence on sociopolitical processes that are taking place amidst globalization and the rise of national self-awareness.

This monograph offers a crucial view of what goal this educational system is currently pursuing within the global context, and in what manner it affects the formation of educational processes on the national scale.

Questioning the significance of a standard in education and revealing the historical evolution of this principle under the influence of various sociopolitical challenges and economic conditions is key to grasping the current state of education. It is viewed as a requisite for progress in the modern world, and in turn demands a critical reexamination and shift of the paradigm that perceives education as a service:

Such a formula reflects a purely consumerist view of education, as a tool for career growth and access to power.

The review of international practices in this monograph provides the necessary practical and informational basis to implement a progressive approach toward articulating the goals of education in Russia, taking into account the prospects for development of international relations and the requirements for ensuring national interests and sovereignty.

The authors address the importance of grasping the depth of the problem of opposing school learning [obrazovaniye] to upbringing [vospitaniye] in the section “Historical-Cultural Milestones of Pedagogical Teachings on Early Education.” Highlighting the importance of the European experience in forging the principles of education, this work compares it with the Russian system of public education [prosveshcheniye] that was built upon the national experience and national needs of Russia.

The authors devote a lot of attention to studying the system of international organizations as a reflection of the historical development of civilization, and to exploring how that process is influenced by principles of education. The focus is on solutions implemented between the First and Second World Wars, when scholars and writers of world renown earnestly tried to foster international cooperation, advocating new political, philosophical, historical, and other ideas. These thoughts came to pervade public opinion after the war, when for the first time a conception took shape to change history textbooks in European countries with the aim to inculcate in the younger generation a spirit of cooperation and peacefulness (p. 76).

This problem is more relevant in today’s world than ever before, especially considering the history of the postwar world and the networks of international organizations that have taken shape up to the present day. Add to these the significance of preserving historical memory – including authentic knowledge of events in the history of the struggle against fascism and Japanese militarism – as the foundation for a stable, peaceful world, and sustainable development (p. 154).

The authors examine the importance of coordinating international actions to work out general approaches to shaping a system of basic and specialized education in the context of the activity of an organization that plays a special role in the UN system. They lay out in detail the significance of the specialized United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and its historical predecessors. In the context of UNESCO’s objectives and Russia’s participation in the process, the book analyzes the role and place of UNESCO’s Education 2030 Agenda [for Sustainable Development].

International Standards of Education: Lessons of History and Modernity makes a valuable contribution toward such knowledge and toward its application in achieving a common goal: peace and security in the human interest, including through public awareness and education, in the manner formulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.