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Russia and Brazil: A Friendship That Has Stood the Test of Time

Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Keywords: Russia, Brazil, multilateral cooperation, interregional interaction.

ON OCTOBER 3, our two nations marked the 195th anniversary of diplomatic relations, which is a significant milestone in our shared history. This notable anniversary offers an excellent opportunity to reflect on the path we have traveled, to identify the most pressing areas of the Russia-Brazil strategic partnership, and to endeavor to look beyond the horizon.

Throughout the years, our bilateral relations have gone through various phases. Yet, the mutual affection and our shared interest in each other's traditions and cultures have remained unwavering and contributed to the strengthening of our friendship.

The first encounter between Russians and the distinctive nation of Brazil took place in the early 19th century, when diplomat and scholar Grigory Langsdorff led a Russian research expedition to study Brazil's flora and fauna.

Bilateral cooperation was formalized in 1828, when Emperor Nicholas I issued a decree appointing an extraordinary envoy and plenipotentiary minister of Russia to Brazil. This decision marked the beginning of a new era not only in the history of Russia-Brazil relations but also in Russia's engagement with Latin America as a whole. Brazil was the first country in the region to establish diplomatic relations with Russia.

In the 20th century, our nations stood shoulder to shoulder in the heroic battle against Nazism.

Today, relying on the existing capital of friendship and mutual trust, we continue to focus on strengthening the constructive and forward-looking partnership between Russia and Brazil. This partnership stands as a top priority in Russia's updated Foreign Policy Concept. We see our relationship as an example of harmonious and constructive collaboration built on sovereign equality, mutual respect, and an unwavering consideration of each other's interests. Our collaboration is immune to the vagaries of international affairs.

There is substantial untapped potential in our practical bilateral cooperation. To harness it, both our nations are diligently working to diversify trade, expand collaboration in high-tech and science-intensive areas, increase investment relationships, and facilitate direct contacts between business communities. In this context, the Russia-Brazil Business Council has a major role to play.

With regard to diplomacy and international relations, we hold Brazil's responsible and independent foreign policy in high regard. Brazil's emphasis on democratizing global governance institutions and increasing the role of developing countries within them aligns with our shared aspiration to build a more equitable multipolar international order grounded in the principles of the UN Charter and respect for the diverse cultures and civilizations of the world.

We hold the existing level of cooperation within the BRICS group in high regard and are determined to reinforce it during Russia's chairmanship in 2024. We are united with our Brazilian counterparts in seeking to reinforce BRICS' role as a pillar of the multipolar architecture. Particular attention is devoted to unlocking the potential of the New Development Bank (NDB), which was established to implement

infrastructure projects in member countries. Russia is committed to working closely with the current NDB president, former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff.

We are satisfied with the extent of cooperation within the G20 framework and endorse Brazil's priorities for its 2024 presidency. These priorities encompass fighting poverty, hunger, and inequality, advancing sustainable development, and reforming international institutions. We wish our Brazilian partners success as they lead this multilateral mechanism during their first presidency.

We value Brazil's balanced stance on the Ukraine crisis and appreciate President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's efforts to contribute to a settlement.

The long-standing friendship and productive collaboration between Russia and Brazil leave no room for doubt that our relationship has stood the test of time. We look to the future with optimism and remain committed to working closely with our Brazilian friends to strengthen our ties across the board for the benefit of our nations, international security, and development.

BRICS as a Symbol of the New World

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Keywords: BRICS, XV summit, Johannesburg

EN ROUTE to the African continent, those of us on the special flight of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov made forecasts about what would happen at the summit in Johannesburg, how BRICS expansion would unfold, which countries would join the Big Five, and how many. After the IL-96 aircraft of the Russia flight group took off, the minister, as is his custom, went into the main cabin to meet with journalists. He was in excellent form, in a good mood, and friendly and witty as always. He wished us successful work. We wished him the same. We flew on, anticipating a large-scale, world-class event. And then there were three days of summit meetings – three days that changed the world forever. Expectations were not simply met, but exceeded the wildest forecasts. The XV BRICS summit became the most representative in the entire history of the association. Delegations from nearly 60 countries took part in the forum. Its decisions, without any exaggeration, can be called historic.

Unlike the G7 states, the BRICS countries are demonstrating global demographic growth. Amid the predicted decline in industry in Europe and the US, the BRICS share in the world economy will also increase. According to forecasts, by 2050, BRICS countries will make the list of the top 10 most efficient economies in the world, and the balance of power in the international arena, as well as the entire architecture of global governance, will change radically and irrevocably.

At the forum, Russia was represented by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, who attended the summit in person. He was greeted with friendly warmth, as an honored and special guest.

The BRICS summit took place amid a flurry of diplomatic activity. According to local observers, BRICS diplomatic activities have seriously undermined the US White House's strategy toward many countries, including Russia. It is obvious that the administrative resources of the "world's police officer" no longer operate as before.

Putin's speech was met with great interest in Johannesburg. He took part in the summit via video link.

Such large-scale interest in BRICS and the rapid growth of the association's influence on the global agenda is obviously not to the liking of Western countries. Even during the preparation stage of the summit, they tried in various ways to prevent it from taking place. Various diplomatic and information

tools were used to sow discord among the BRICS countries, particularly on the Ukrainian issue: a meeting in Jeddah, a G7 meeting in Hiroshima, a so-called “summit” meeting in Copenhagen, as well as ongoing speculation regarding alleged differences in BRICS over the admission of new members to the organization.

Lavrov gave his assessment of the destructive policy of the so-called collective West during his final press conference.

Despite everything, BRICS is confidently moving forward, as clearly illustrated by the summit in Johannesburg. Member countries still have to formulate new regulations, establish new rules of interaction, and work on creating their own models in the financial sector as alternatives to Western ones (their own payment system, a new transfer system as an alternative to SWIFT, and their own insurance systems). But, as they say, where there’s a will, there’s a way. Moreover, the organization’s expansion opens up enormous opportunities for increasing mutual investments.

It is well known that any interaction is a two-way street, and in the case of BRICS, it is a multidirectional one. Of course, these multidirectional tracks can still have hidden dangers stemming from the destructive policies of the West. Closer and more diverse interaction within BRICS is aimed at establishing and strengthening emergent models of effective and mutually beneficial cooperation that are not subject to the whims of the 21st-century neocolonialists. The XV summit in Johannesburg took a giant step in this direction.

Johannesburg, 2023

The Fate of the State in a Changing World

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Keywords: “shrinking” state, sovereignty, financial capital, network space

THE main phenomenon of the social mainstream is the institution of the state and its evolution (“shrinking”), associated with the increased activity of civil society and a reevaluation of the role of the market.

The social nature of humans is deeply rooted in the past, when collective forms of human existence were a sine qua none of survival, while the state was a “product” of social organization. In the pre-state era, it was supported by the “cage of norms” (customs, traditions, etc.).

According to Thomas Hobbes, a main factor of the emergence of states was the “war of every man against every man,” as well as the implementation of the institution of private property.⁴ The legal space and the state ensure its inviolability.

The liberal order invariably produced a dichotomy between the interests of society and the institutions represented by the state on the one hand, and the rights and freedoms of the individual on the other. The logic of this social order in its extreme form is Libertarianism, with its slogan of “less government.”

The dichotomy of the interests of the state and of the individual crops up in a dialectical contradiction resolved with the help of effective mechanisms of mutual obligations of individuals and society as a whole (the “ethical state,” according to Paul Collier.)

Libertarians believe that social evolution must overcome the war of all against all and a single state with “echo chambers” of local network communities.

However, the changing architecture of planetary civilization is replacing the state not with “echo chambers” but with a new type of state that relies on network organizations and the reasonable behavior of the governed, not on a hierarchy of power.

The unification of state and society in the common network space makes it possible to reproduce practices of direct democracy (the publication of laws with transparent procedures for their discussion, public opinion polls, etc.)

The socioeconomic phenomenon of the rent society that sums up the negative trends of financial capitalism is a sign that the stage of modernity is drawing to a close.

The center that determines the structure, hierarchy, social roles, and, therefore, the size of the rent of each agent is the state, which regulates access and a guaranteed social status. Capitalism has already exhausted the geographical development factor of the planet, which means that the state and alliances play much greater roles in the competition for global rental flows.

Today, a wider circle of agents of world politics are contributing to the evolution of the system of international relations. Its new agents (terrorist organizations, NGOs, transnational corporations, and others) seek to compete with the state, which remains the main moderator of the new agents’ social role. Some of those agents are opposed, others acquire special powers to fulfill their socially useful roles, while others are kept within certain limits.

We cannot deny that the institution of international cooperation is playing an increasingly greater role when dealing with problems that are beyond the competences of national sovereignties: They have the prerogative to set up supranational political institutions.

Another reason to deny the state its future in the international arena is rising global threats that no state is equipped to handle on its own (safeguarding global security; fighting poverty, epidemics, and epizootics; preserving human habitats).

The uncontrolled growth of information flows that increase the transparency of national borders are one reason to claim that states are losing their agency in international relations. In the absence of an international system of regulation of information flows, states remain the only institution able to protect public interests and national security from destruction. The state can and must control information flows not by restricting unwelcome content but by acquiring agency in cyberspace and building mechanisms to ensure national security from within.

A threat to sovereignty can be seen in the unification of consumer preferences imposed on the world population by mass culture and the West.

Another aspect of the “decline” of the state in the context of the hierarchy of international relations is that the hegemon remains in power, but only for countries that voluntarily accept this. The current situation, characterized as a civilizational confrontation between the West and nonWest, pushes aside the national sovereignty of these states in the interests of the dominance of trans-Atlantic consolidation and of the US. This is why the project of a future world order looks like a new bipolarity.

Obviously, theoretical ideas about the “shrinking state” in the current social realities are not representative or projected but serve the social mainstream, determined by the interests of the elite, which increasingly functions as an agent of retreating financial capital.

Evolution of the World Order and Russia's Ideas About the Outside World

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Keywords: pivot to the East, position of the PRC, ASEAN Way, Greater Eurasian Partnership

THE idea of the outside world and the role that Russia plays in it has undergone radical changes in Moscow's official worldviews since 2014.

The degradation of the international security situation indicates a deep crisis in the existing world order, which was formed in the spirit of the US's unipolar hegemony after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Contrary to the predictions of the Western school, rulemaking involving "responsible players" and the promotion of a Western-centric system of international institutions did not lead to the "end of history." New political and economic centers of power are defending their development paths, which involve rejecting the replication of the liberal-democratic model.

Against this backdrop, in Russia, China, India, and Japan, there is intensive absorption, rethinking, and rejection of Western models along with their practical application that has not always been successful in Asian regions. An Eastern principle is needed to solve Asian international relations problems and catch up with the current historical stage in AsianAfrican development.

Studying the specifics of the Eastern development path will make it possible to determine the priorities of non-Western countries in the international arena in the context of the emergent multipolar world order.

In 2022, another crisis occurred in China's relations with the US and Taiwan, sparked by the visit of Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi to the island of Taiwan. Such crises regularly occur in SinoAmerican relations. Where is the red line that, if crossed, would signify a shift from crisis to war in the eyes of both China and the US?

At the present stage, China is strengthening its position not only as a regional center of power but also as a global player. High rates of economic development have contributed to China's transformation into one of the world's leading economies. China has become a leader in the technology race. In this regard, the need to transform the Western-centric Bretton Woods System, in which non-Western states are assigned a secondary role, has become more urgent.

As for India, New Delhi maintains its customary approach of balanced development of relations with Asian countries. Russia, China, Iran, Pakistan, the US, and Britain are cornerstone partners of Indian diplomacy.

In Southeast Asia, ASEAN crucially contributes to the formation of the regional system.

Today, ASEAN plays a central role in strengthening multilateral cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region aimed at both developing economic ties between states and maintaining peace and security.

In modern international relations, the Islamic world plays an independent role.

Religious, cultural, and traditional spiritual and moral values determine the culture of communication between states within the region and with external players. Due to the significant politicization of Islam,

ideas about a just world order are also linked to the dogmas of the Koran. The dominance of Islamic ideas in the sociopolitical life of Muslim countries reduces their receptivity to the moral and ethical principles and political values of Western-style liberal democracy. In particular, the significance of collective principles and willingness for self-sacrifice stand in opposition to the ideals of individualism.

Africa is another region with an increasing role on the international stage. The continent is characterized by internal political instability and interstate conflicts of varying intensity.

FROM 1991 to the present day, Russian diplomacy has undergone significant changes, affecting both the mechanism of strategic planning and the hierarchy of global and regional priorities in Russia's foreign policy. In the 1990s, the primary task of the Russian Federation was to strengthen the liberal-democratic foundations of development within the country, relying on the experience of Western states.

A change in foreign policy guidelines began to occur after Yevgeny Primakov became Russia's foreign minister in 1996, and then under his successors Igor Ivanov and Sergey Lavrov. The emphasis was placed on the need to diversify the country's foreign policy in consideration of the national interests of the Russian Federation. Later, these ideas were enshrined in the Foreign Policy Concept of 2000. Until 2016, strategic planning of Russian diplomacy was carried out on the basis of consolidating goals, objectives, and the resulting global and regional priorities.

Russia's new perception of the external world is reflected in the concept of the Greater Eurasian Partnership. This integration project, first presented by Putin in 2015 in his Message to the Federal Assembly of the Federation Council, aims to strengthen the foundations of a multipolar world through diversified interaction with the support of the EAEU, SCO, and ASEAN.

A peculiarity of Russia's modern perception of the world is the importance of cultural and civilizational factors. Priority attention is given to safeguarding the traditional spiritual and moral values that form the foundation of statehood. Preservation and popularization of cultural and historical heritage, and the preservation of the traditions and foundations of Russian society are viewed as tools for creating a favorable image of the Russian Federation abroad. At the same time, Russia's approach is based on respect for the political, economic, and cultural identity of other states. This factor allows us to win over friendly countries, creating opportunities for the mutual enrichment of our cultures.

The trends and tendencies in the evolution of Russia's priorities and positions in the international arena, as outlined above, were enshrined in the basic strategic foreign policy planning document of the Russian Federation. It is important that efforts undertaken at the official level, including diplomatic efforts, are accompanied by the development of the domestic school of international relations. Just as there is no single model of political development of a state, it is impossible to develop a formula that would reflect the essence of a particular global or regional process. Instead of universalizing Western concepts and theories, we should intensify work to develop a theory of international relations that considers the new realities of the emerging multipolar world order.

Apocalypse of Our Time: The Face and the Underbelly of Western Culture and Civilization

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Keywords: Russia, the West, colonial conquests, genocide of the indigenous population

I FINISHED writing this work, logically expressed in three parts in terms of content and problems, but in its essence and spirit organically representing a single whole, on June 22, 2023 – the date of the anniversary of the attack of fascist Germany on my homeland, the Soviet Union. That day remained in my memory for the rest of my life.

THE title of this article was chosen in connection with a very important event in the spiritual life of humankind and my personal life: the 1,700th anniversary of the Revelation of John the Theologian – the Apocalypse.

The Greek Orthodox Church and the Greek government organized a large international conference dedicated to this date. Representatives of all Orthodox Christian churches, other Christian denominations, as well as well-known scientists and cultural figures were invited. Since I was studying world philosophy, including ancient Greek philosophy, as well as history, religion, and culture, I received an invitation to participate in the conference.

I was invited to come with my whole family, but circumstances were such that I was only able to take with me my youngest son Alexander, then still a schoolboy.

We can say that the entire content of my article is a kind of echo of the Apocalypse of John the Theologian.

The history and literature of the Western world is replete with stories of the amazing adventures of Europeans in distant lands, making new geographical discoveries that fascinate any reader with pictures of unknown worlds unseen before. Unsophisticated readers have always marveled at the remarkable human qualities of the pioneers, their intelligence, ingenuity, nobility, and lofty ideals. While still in school, I relished novels by Jules Verne and other European writers and admired the exploits of the heroes of these stories. So did all my peers. The difficulties that the discoverers encountered on their journey made their lives heroic, and their determination, energy, and will evoked respect and admiration.

Was the overall picture so ideal in reality? Alas, this is not always the case; history testifies rather to the contrary.

European authors often tried to embellish their “deeds,” to present them as something noble, creative, and aimed at improving the lives of all humankind. In reality, the history of the Western world is, unfortunately, inextricably tied with its crimes against humans and humanity, no matter how pretty the images it may be hiding behind.

To this day, European culture and science are deservedly and rightly admired. Anyone who visits any European country admires its architecture, painting, literature, music, theater, etc. Masterpieces created, for example, during the Renaissance are truly impressive.

However, at the same time, as a scientist and any critical thinker, the question has never left me: At what and by whose expense was this achieved? By what means and methods?

Usually, during discussions of cultural issues, such questions have not been asked; they have simply been avoided. But these questions are at the heart of the great European achievements. Thanks to geographical discoveries and conquests of new lands, Europeans developed their economy, science, and culture. The huge funds necessary for this were siphoned off from the colonies.

The progress of Western culture was organically connected with the development of capitalism and imperialism. The widely proclaimed freedom, democracy, competition, creative initiative, and the formation of higher spiritual values – all this was essentially aimed at the all-round enrichment of Europeans and the enslavement and robbery of the colonized peoples.

The discovery of America, this meeting and clash of civilizations, was an epochal event in the history of mankind. For some, it became an increase in power and prosperity, for others – a real disaster. Here, for the first time, “white men” began to ruthlessly destroy the indigenous population that had lived on these lands for centuries.

It is obvious that the entire colonial policy of Western countries was and is a direct and immediate genocide, with all ensuing consequences. And no good motives can hide the essence of this cruel, inhuman policy of genocide and violence, which is the second if not the first nature of the “enlightened” and “progressive” Western civilization.

I recall a conference at the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, held jointly with the United States Institute for Strategic Studies, whose participants included representatives of the General Staff and other Russian military agencies and military professionals and experts from various military organizations and institutions of the US. It discussed in detail issues of civilian oversight of the armed forces. The reports and discussions revealed that in the Soviet Union, civilian oversight was quite evident, whereas in the US, such control over the country’s armed forces was very weak. Today, US domestic and foreign policy is even more strictly directed in the interests of the military-industrial complex.

Apocalypse of Our Time: Alter Ego of the Third Reich

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Keywords: Germany, Third Reich, Britain, public schools, racial theory, Nazis, Russophobia

WORLD WAR II changed the face of the contemporary world. The accumulated evil that flooded the world in the form of tragic and unprecedented slaughter is associated with the ferocious and ruthless cruelty of the Third Reich and of Hitler personally.

The history of Germany, of the First and the Second Reich, is well known. We know all the dates, names of prominent figures, key events, etc. It should be said, however, that these sociopolitical forms and structures contained various elements and trends ranging from liberal-democratic to right-wing conservative. But, as always, what most people know is only the tip of the iceberg. Not everyone knows the real causes and the names of the real perpetrators, and many have simply never considered or think about the deep sources of historical processes.

We know that Great Britain is the cradle of the contemporary parliamentary system, a country with old democratic traditions, of social and political stability in which riots, turmoil, etc. were impossible. Its greatness, aristocracy, and stability seemed eternal thanks to the institution of royal power. Indeed, prime ministers come and go, while kings or queens replace each other on the throne. And this is not the only set of stereotypes.

Is this absolutely true? The British parliament is indeed famous for its stability. According to historical documents, two-thirds of its members elected between 1660 and 1945 belonged to 368 families. Is this good or bad? Consensus on suffrage has never been universal: The lower social strata demanded universal suffrage, while the ruling class believed that it alone had the right to vote. Winston Churchill, one of the outstanding figures of British history, believed that elections were a misfortune that prevented the normal social and economic development of any, even the most democratic country.

In his work *Hitler's English Inspirers: Based on Lectures Given in Heidelberg University*, Emanuel Sarkisyanz, an outstanding historian of European fascism, offered a lot of interesting facts about the British roots and the role of Britain in the development of racist, nationalist, and fascist ideas and doctrines and, above all, its role as a pattern used by the German Nazis to raise, educate, and train future führers.

The English, including directors of many public schools, acknowledged that German schools were modeled after British public schools. The Germans did not conceal that future führers, a new white master race who would efficiently govern populations of conquered colonies, would be brought up and educated in elite schools: "Britain with its Eton system ... built up a world empire." Nazi teachers never missed a chance to point out: "public schools such as Eton – a stronghold of the good old English tradition – were expected to raise führers similar to those who ruled Britain and the British empire."

Public schools were expected to foster unconditional and limitless love of and respect toward Britain as the best system of government in the world – an empire with no equals. They taught imperial thinking as an absolute virtue: restraint; coldness; suppression of outward expression of feelings; and arrogance toward and disdain for other nations and peoples. They cultivated racist ideology with its cruelty toward and contempt of lower races, a sense of absolute English superiority over all other races and peoples of the world, and finally, an intuitive and practically inborn awareness of the superiority of their language over that of other peoples.

German Nazis and practically the rest of Europe treated war as a noble, necessary, and to a certain extent sanctified phenomenon associated with conquering Lebensraum for the highest race of white masters.

Hitler was convinced that increasing the distance "between the master and lower races was the core of the British imperialist ethos and the secret of British success. This is where the ties between race and empire were hidden; this is why he insisted that in Russia, the Third Reich should imitate British rule in India."

We knew that at that time the Communist Party of Germany was one of the strongest and most influential communist parties on the continent. It seems that German ruling circles suppressed the opposition and deceived the common people. Soldiers and officers of the fascist army cited propaganda to justify their involvement in this worldwide slaughter and to absolve themselves of responsibility for millions of deaths. To an extent, this slaughter became possible because the Comintern had considerably weakened its efforts. The fascist leaders of Germany got a chance to unite the main forces of their country and mobilize its population to conquer other countries.

A British Nazi offered an interesting remark: "Hitler's only mistake was not being born an Englishman." It is no wonder that Hitler, having perfectly learned the main lesson of the British Nazi ideology, said that there could not be two chosen peoples: "We are the people of God. This says everything."

In Britain, fascist sentiments were fairly strong in ruling circles; the political elite followed with a lot of empathy all the feats, so to speak, of the German Nazis. It is next to impossible to imagine what English supporters of fascism would have done in their country had the fascists won. The Tories, or at least a large share of them, were convinced that German fascism could protect against socialism and communism.

Fascism is an immanent product of Britain's historical development. It was not borrowed but born by the basic demands of the economic, social, and political life of the country. It is no wonder that Nazis of all stripes perceived it as a pattern. Britons try to dissociate themselves from the most scandalous and odious figures and forms of fascism.

How did “civilized” and “educated” Britain deal with “weak” and “uneducated” Indians? Its “iron civilizational fist” hit not only the body but also crippled the soul of Indian society, which was bigger than the West, much richer culturally, much older, and much wiser. The British version of the West robbed India of its vast riches that allowed London to rule unilaterally a bigger part of the globe for 200 years.

Extreme Russophobia is not a distortion, ugliness, or destruction of reason: It warns the world of mortal danger. Giulietto Chiesa demonstrated that Russophobia revealed the essence of the contemporary West: “The West is on the verge of a crisis – an absolute and unprecedented crisis that could lead to collapse. To nip it in the bud, it is necessary to first eliminate Russia.”

Chiesa commented that Western domination can be attributed not to its intellectual and cultural superiority but to the force, arrogance, shamelessness, and cruelty with which it imposes its ideas, opinions, and tastes on other peoples.

The New Multipolar Order: Heptarchy and Its Meanings

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Keywords: world order, sovereignty, civilization, Modern Age, multipolarity

TODAY, the world order is changing so rapidly that the institutions associated with international politics do not have time to adequately respond to this, nor fully comprehend it. A timid theory emerged in Russia that international law is something solid and stable, something that considers the interests of all parties, while the theory of “rules,” promoted by the collective West and North American elites, and the rules-based order established on them is some kind of trick aimed at consolidating hegemony. This begs for a more in-depth analysis.

Each civilization comprised several states and frequently many very different ethnic groups. Each civilization had its own distinct religious identity, which was embodied in politics, culture, ethics, art, lifestyle, technology, and philosophy.

Each civilization represented a complete and completely autonomous world – not only a sovereign culture, but an absolutely original understanding of the surroundings and nature. Each empire lived in its own imperial cosmos, whose parameters and structures were determined based on the dominant religion and its tenets.

West European Modernity introduced an idea completely alien to all existing civilizations, including the Catholic-Christian one: the idea of linear time and the progressive development of humankind (later evolved into the idea of progress). Those who embraced this attitude began to propagate the fundamental ideas that the “old,” “ancient,” and “traditional” is obviously worse, more primitive, and cruder than the “new,” “progressive,” and “modern.”

The concept of a single civilization (civilization in the singular) that would embody the destiny of all humankind first arose in Western Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. This destiny consisted in overcoming tradition and traditional values, hence it brushed aside the very foundation of the sacral civilizations that existed at that time. They meant nothing more than backwardness (compared to the modern West) and a set of prejudices and false idols.

THUS began the construction of a “global international system” (according to Buzan), or “the second nomos of the Earth” (according to Schmitt).

The West began to transform itself and at the same time more and more actively influence the zones of other civilizations. In Western Europe, a rapid process began of destroying the sacred foundations of its own culture.

In parallel, the colonization of other civilizations – the American continent, Africa, and Asian countries – was in full swing. And even those empires – the Chinese, Russian, Iranian, and Ottoman – that resisted direct occupation and maintained their independence were subjected to cultural colonization, gradually absorbing the attitudes of West European Modernity to the detriment of their own sacred traditional values.

THE process of constructing the second “international system” (“the second nomos of the Earth”) culminated in the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years’ War between Protestants and Roman Catholics. The Peace of Westphalia established the first explicit model of international law – Jus Publicum Europaeum – completely rejecting the principles of the medieval order. Henceforth, only nation-states were recognized as bearers of sovereignty, regardless of their religion or political system (all states were monarchies at the time).

Gradually, however, the status of sovereignty began to extend to some colonies, if they managed to shake off the colonial power. This was the case during the American War of Independence. Later, other colonial entities followed in the footsteps of the US and were gradually accepted into the European club. Henceforth, the Westphalian principles were extended to them as well. This came to be known as the Westphalian system of international relations.

The USSR fell outside the dualism of “modern societies” and “barbaric states,” as it challenged the entire capitalist world, but it was not an inertial continuation of traditional society (rather, on the contrary, modernization in the USSR was extremely radical, and sacred values were destroyed even more than in the West).

The emergence of the phenomenon of European fascism and especially German National Socialism aggravated ideological contradictions even further, this time within Western Europe itself. After Hitler came to power, Germany began to rapidly build a new European order.

World War II was a clash of these three ideological poles. In essence, what was happening was a brief superimposition upon the system of international relations of a tripolar international model with a pronounced conflict and antagonistic ideological dominant. For ideological reasons, each of the poles denied all the others, which naturally led to the collapse of the League of Nations and to World War II.

Carl Schmitt calls bipolarity and the Cold War balance of power “the third nomos of the Earth,” while Buzan does not distinguish it as a special model of the world order, considering it an extension of the “global international system” (which somewhat weakens the relevance of his general theory).

THE COLLAPSE of the socialist camp and the Warsaw Pact and the demise of the Soviet Union led to the end of the bipolar world order based on the ideological principle of capitalism against socialism. Socialism lost, and the Soviet Union capitulated and collapsed. Moreover, it recognized and accepted the enemy ideology. Hence the Russian Federation, built on the basis of liberal capitalist norms. With the loss of socialism and the Soviet Union, Russia also lost its sovereignty.

This is how the “fourth nomos of the Earth” began to take shape. Carl Schmitt foresaw it but did not live to see it. Barry Buzan defined it as a “postmodern international system.” This new model of international relations and the emerging system of international law was supposed to consolidate the established unipolarity. Of the two poles, only one remained – the liberal one. From then on, all states, peoples, and societies were supposed to accept it as the only ideological model.

The West seeks to consolidate the unipolar system – “the League of Democracies,” “the Summit of Democracies” – by designating those who disagree with this hegemony as “rogue states.” So far, it has not been possible to achieve this at the level of international law, which remains nominally Westphalian-bipolar, and that is why the globalists decided to introduce the concept of “rules” and proclaimed a rules-based world order, where the rules are written, implemented, and protected by a single center – the global West.

TODAY, after the 15th BRICS summit, this heptapolarity of seven civilizations – Liberal West, Maoist-Confucian China, Orthodox Eurasian Russia, Vedantic India, the Islamic world (Sunni-Shia), Latin America, and Africa – has generally been outlined. Its contours are drawn quite clearly. But of course, this model has not yet become a new system of international law. There is still a long way to go.

The Earth’s new nomos is ahead of us. A fierce battle is being fought for its outlines – above all in Ukraine, which is the front between the unipolar and the multipolar world orders. And all the structures of the different layers of international law – from the ancient-classical to Westphalian, bipolar, and unipolar – are clearly present in this brutal war for the meanings and orientations of the new world that is being created before our eyes.

Ukraine and the West: War and Elections

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Keywords: Ukraine, election, Zelensky, Zaluzhny, Biden, counteroffensive

WHY is the Western theory of the Nord Stream 2 [natural gas pipeline] explosion filled with details proving that the Ukrainians are responsible? Le Figaro has pulled together information from The New York Times, Die Zeit, Süddeutsche Zeitung, ZDF, and Der Spiegel to conclude that Ukraine is the prime suspect. Earlier, Poland, the US, and even Russia had been suspected. According to media sources, German investigators have no doubts: The operation was carried out by the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) with Western support.

The new theory contained new elements: One of the crew members was identified as Ukrainian Valery K., who chartered the yacht using a false Moldovan identity. According to Der Spiegel, he was a career soldier attached to the AFU 93rd mechanized brigade. There are even more interesting facts: The crew of six included frogmen and a doctor; it took orders directly from AFU Commander-in-Chief Valery Zaluzhny.

According to the Western press, some Western countries were fully aware of Kiev’s intention and probably tried to dissuade it. To sum up: This goes back not merely to Ukraine but to one of its citizens: AFU Commander-in-Chief Zaluzhny. To preserve their immaculate image and protect themselves from the unintended disclosure of their own role, Ukraine’s Western patrons preferred to point their fingers at Kiev and a certain person.

A parliamentary election in Ukraine is scheduled for October 2023, and a presidential election is to follow in the spring of 2024. According to the Constitution, no election is possible when martial law is in effect. Zelensky has said more than once that the head of state could be elected after the war has ended. Podolyak did not exclude the possibility that both the parliamentary and the presidential election would take place in 2024.

Western patrons, meanwhile, are insisting on elections. Republican US Senator Lindsey Graham said that the presidential election should be carried out as scheduled despite hostilities.

America is shamelessly drawing Ukraine into its own campaign cycle: “The Joe Biden administration can give Ukraine only vague and soft security guarantees, since it does not have the ability to ensure them for several years to come.” The future of the world depends on the results of the US presidential election, the Americans say without batting an eye. And if the Democrats lose, that will be bad for everyone; no one gets any guarantees. This instilled a lot of fear in Kiev, Paris, Berlin, Warsaw, and other anti-Russian capitals. All ruling regimes are under threat. This was told to Kiev directly but applies to everyone, and they all understand this. Only Zelensky tried to haggle.

According to the Pentagon, Kiev should have amassed as many troops as possible in one area of the front to break through the defenses. The aim is clear: A powerful attack on Melitopol-Mariupol would bring NATO to the Sea of Azov and cut off Russia’s land route to Crimea. Attractive pictures of Azov beaches are shown in social networks and on CNN. All this can and will begin and end with the concentration of the biggest possible number of troops, yet pictures of a successful counteroffensive are badly needed: at least tanks with crosses in the streets of Melitopol, if only for a short while. Later the West will chalk up everything to a shortage of arms and ammunition, to Ukraine’s inability to use them sensibly, and to the terrible and insidious Russians.

Zaluzhny cannot compete with Zelensky when it comes to political influence and, consequently, political responsibility. A new mobilization wave would increase the burden of Zelensky’s responsibility. Zaluzhny, meanwhile, was merely leading troops into battle on someone else’s orders, even if they come from NATO headquarters. In fact, this is why Ukraine still exists. Zaluzhny is involved in politics using the means available to him. To make a breakthrough, he needs some sort of victory or a frozen conflict. His military path would be presented as that of a “winner and savior of Ukraine.” We should not forget, however, that other options besides Zaluzhny are possible.

Today, the main issue before Zelensky is how to avoid a new level of delegitimization of the Ukrainian government. The parliament has not been reelected, and the president has no intention of facing voters. In fact, the problem of the legitimacy of the Ukrainian government has been accumulating since the first Ukrainian “color revolution” of 2005.

India’s New Foreign Trade Policy

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Keywords: Indian economy, MSMEs, cluster cities

MODERN India is a dynamically developing country with a robust industry, significant labor resources, a diverse mineral and raw material base, a growing science and technology potential, and a rapidly expanding service sector that includes information technology, e-commerce, banking and finance, transportation, and construction.

India’s economy is the fastest growing among the largest nations.

Implementation of the foreign trade policy is a key area of the country’s development. In early 2023, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India unveiled a new foreign trade policy, which came into effect on April 1, 2023.

As part of the new foreign trade policy of India, the goal is to increase the volume of exports of goods and services to \$2 trillion by 2030.

The new policy is assumed to be in line with the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), including alignment with WTO norms for exporter support programs – transitioning from subsidies to tax exemptions.

The export promotion measures under India's new foreign trade policy are largely aimed at supporting the country's micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

MSMEs play a key role in India's economy. According to the Ministry of MSME, there are approximately 63 million such enterprises in the country, providing over 113 million jobs. They contribute to around 30% of the GDP, about 45% of production, and about 40% of the export of goods and services.

Additionally, the cost of obtaining regulatory documents for MSMEs has been reduced.

To stimulate India's trade activity, Indian intermediaries are allowed to engage in commercial activities for the movement of goods from one foreign country to another without entering Indian ports. This activity must comply with the guidelines of the Reserve Bank of India, and the goods must not be subject to restrictions related to their dual use.

The system of electronic payments, RuPay, and the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) continue to expand. The UAE, France, the United Kingdom, Benelux countries, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Singapore, Malaysia, Bhutan, Oman, Maldives, and Nepal have already joined.

All support measures offered under the foreign trade policy apply to the e-commerce sector. Within six months from the date of the program's entry into force, IT solutions must be implemented in the activities of the Department of Commerce, Postal Service, and Central Board of Excise and Customs. Additionally, training programs for the implementation of these solutions must be prepared.

Among other things, India is trying to capitalize on the advantages of key sectors of its economy (light and chemical industries and agriculture) and stimulate the development of promising sectors, including high-tech manufacturing and energy.

The strengthening role of Indian states and districts in implementing export support and development programs highlights the need to establish relationships at the regional level. Work with the leadership of Indian states is recommended, with a subsequent transition to the level of districts and municipalities, considering their industry affiliation and the needs of Russian regions for certain products. Indian companies benefiting from export promotion programs could supply goods to constituent entities of the Russian Federation at the lowest cost. It is possible to establish interaction at the level of regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry, exchanging information about the needs of Russian businesses for certain goods or services that Indian entrepreneurs could provide.

Additionally, it is worth noting that India's new foreign trade policy places the primary emphasis on providing assistance, benefits, and preferences to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Streamlining procedures for exporting high-tech products can further enhance the supply of these goods from India to Russia, addressing potential shortages caused by trade restrictions.

Intelligence and Diplomacy

Sergey Naryshkin *Director, Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, Chairman, Russian Historical Society*

Keywords: intelligence, diplomacy, SVR, Russian Foreign Ministry

DEAR readers, colleagues, friends! First off, I would like to thank the editorial staff of International Affairs for the opportunity to address you on these pages, in this esteemed journal, which marked its centenary last year.

The importance of effective informational and educational public outreach has increased greatly amid the current complex foreign policy situation, when a full-scale hybrid war has been launched against our country and aggressive attempts are being made to “punish” and “cancel” Russia, deprive us of our history, erode the moral guideposts of young Russians, reprogram them, and impose on them pseudo values that are alien to us. That is why I readily supported the initiative by Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) veterans to launch a new public political journal called Razvedchik [Intelligence Officer], the first issue of which came out in December 2022. It publishes analysis of the most topical current problems, historical essays and archival documents about unique operations carried out by Russian intelligence agencies, and interesting interviews with our contemporaries, including legendary deep-cover agents and their family members.

y. If we delve a little deeper into history, we can confidently say that intelligence and diplomacy are not only closely related and share common roots in the Posolsky Prikaz [Department of Foreign Affairs], created in 1549 on the order of Ivan the Terrible, but are actually two sides of the same coin.

In their early days, intelligence and diplomacy were virtually inseparable. Amid feudal fragmentation and a lack of diplomatic and stable trade ties, almost everyone who traveled abroad for one reason or another – from royal envoys and merchants to ordinary travelers – gathered information about other countries. Information about diplomatic practices of the ancient Rus can be found in the Greek Life of SS. Stephen of Sourzh and the Life of George of Amastris.

In Russia, diplomacy and intelligence developed according to a similar scenario. For two and a half centuries – from the institution of Posolsky Prikaz until the early 19th century, when military agents (a prototype of military attachés) began to be assigned to Russian missions abroad – no distinction was made between careers in intelligence and diplomacy. At the same time, I would like to underscore the successful efforts of Peter the Great that drastically improved the process of finding out political, economic, and military secrets abroad.

The story of Count Pyotr Andreyevich Tolstoy, known as Russia’s first resident ambassador, is even more remarkable. Before setting off for Istanbul in 1702 on an open-ended mission, he received a full-fledged intelligence assignment from Peter the Great: “Study and describe the people there; the type of government; state and government officials; their military and political activity with other states; secret preparations for war – against what countries, at sea or on land,” etc. And it must be said that despite his age (57 at the time of departure), the count carried out his assignment commendably. For more than 10 years, he provided Moscow with highly valuable information, while at the same time keeping the Turkish sultan from going to war against Russia. And when, as a result of intrigues by France and Sweden, Turkey violated its neutrality and our ambassador was jailed, spending almost 18 months in captivity, Tolstoy managed to send important reports to Moscow through his reliable agents.

In 1715, Artemy Petrovich Volynsky was sent as an ambassador to Persia, where, in addition to diplomatic functions, he successfully carried out intelligence assignments.

Several of the “revolutionary call-up” intelligence officers had lived in emigration and were fluent in foreign languages. It was largely due to their dedication and experience that the VChK Foreign Department almost immediately turned into the main channel for information about the policies of foreign governments and began to play a leading role in the Soviet intelligence community at the time, which naturally included the People’s Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID). It is worth noting that shortly before the start of the Great Patriotic War, personnel were frequently rotated between the

VChK Foreign Department and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID): Intelligence officers were often sent abroad as ambassadors, especially to Soviet diplomatic missions in key countries, while career diplomats were invited to work for the intelligence agency.

It must be said that there was a rationale behind the idea of creating a single analytical center: IC employees processed a colossal amount of information, read all materials available in the public domain, and compiled dossiers on every important topic. Furthermore, as they received documents from other intelligence agencies, they compared them with each other and prepared reports for those at the top that described the situation from various angles, not just based on information from one source, as had often been the case before.

Regarding the work of ambassadors and station chiefs, I should note that under the present conditions, due to professional specifics, combining two such responsible posts is extremely difficult. Nevertheless, not so long ago, such precedents existed. In this context, I will mention Maj. Gen. Aleksandr Semyonovich Panyushkin, a senior foreign intelligence official.

A month and a half before Hitler's attack on the USSR, the German command's tactical plan regarding the main directions of the Nazis' military advance, as well as reliable information about the real intentions of the Japanese military, were obtained under Panyushkin's leadership.

Our most recent history evokes memories of our contemporaries, above all Yevgeny Maksimovich Primakov and Vyacheslav Ivanovich Trubnikov. Both of them, like Panyushkin, were heads of foreign intelligence at different periods and had the closest possible ties with the Foreign Ministry.

I am convinced that all intelligence officers and diplomats should be highly educated experts and true patriots, since they have great responsibility in providing the country's leadership with reliable information and forecasts that are essential for prompt and efficient decision making at the state level. This is particularly important amid rising tensions in many parts of the world and the extremely complicated situation along the perimeter of our Motherland.

It is encouraging that at the new stage of our common history, the SVR and the Foreign Ministry continue to work closely together on all key issues, identifying immediate and potential threats to our national interests and developing measures to neutralize them.

In conclusion, I would like to address young diplomats and intelligence officers who, working hand in hand, continue to write the joint chronicle of their agencies' glorious victories. Right now, as has happened more than once before, in fighting for its future, our country is confronting the entire power of the collective West. In this regard, I would like to remind you of remarks that outstanding Russian poet and diplomat Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev made 170 years ago, in October 1853, in connection with the outbreak of the Crimean War: "It could have been predicted long ago that this blind hatred for Russia, which has been increasingly incited in the West with every passing year, would flare up someday. Now this moment has come. The West as a whole has come to show its denial of Russia and block its path to the future." Clearly, back then, Westerners failed to either "cancel" Russia or contain its development. They will fail again this time, too.

The Ideological Security of the Union State of Russia and Belarus

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Keywords: geopolitical changes, Russia, Belarus, Union State of Russia and Belarus, ideology

ACCELERATING global geopolitical changes have moved security higher up on the agenda of the Union State of Russia and Belarus. After the Union State adopted a new military doctrine in 2021, it became essential for Russia and Belarus to develop ideas to form the basis for an ideological security system for the Union State. This article proposes a set of ideas that are shared by Russia and Belarus, in tune with 21st-century realities, based on historical experience, do not conflict with the national interests of either country, and have the potential for the same emotional impact on Russians as on Belarusians.

In the view of Sergey Karaganov, a well-known Russian political scientist and economist, without a central idea, any great nation will either cease to exist or cease to be great.

In Russia, there are three fundamental ideas that have been supported by a large proportion of the population since the 11th century: social justice, a desire for Russia to be a great power, and a desire for a strong state (not in order of importance) [9, p. 116]. Russia can hardly be called a country and civilization with clear ideological traditions. Its lack of a unifying national idea has repeatedly split elites, destabilized the government, and provoked national upheavals. There has been one partial exception: the clearly formulated state ideology that existed in the Soviet period and formed the philosophical basis for the construction of communism.

The relationship between Russia and Belarus is one of the first examples of mutual integration of post-Soviet countries based on social processes, cultural similarity, and historical ties [14, p. 38]. Over the past 30 years, a generation has grown up in each of the two countries that has no links to the Soviet era. Alexander Sosnovsky concludes that most young people in Belarus have ceased to espouse the state ideology, and this threatens to create a vacuum that may be filled with pernicious ideas and theories.

Social inequality remains a problem for Russia. The World Bank, citing Gini coefficients, estimated that as of the end of 2020, the level of inequality in Russia was much higher than in European countries but lower than the global maximum shown by developing countries.

LATE 20th-century reforms in the Soviet Union brought a new socioeconomic system into being in the post-Soviet space, but the social equality ideal that had been promoted during the Soviet socialist era survived in the minds of those who had grown up in the former USSR and came to be equated with social justice throughout the former Soviet republics. This plays the determining role for mutual understanding and harmony in both Russian and Belarusian society [20, P. 4].

Russia has achieved one of the initial phases of a social state, a phase that combines the rule of law with socially unacceptable distances between the masses and elites.

The idea of a Soviet-type strong state appeals to the modern average Russian, since the Soviet strong social state was able to protect its people from foreign and domestic threats despite its scant resources [25, p. 130]. A strong state means effective legal and government institutions and the priority of national interests over personal ones. Yana Kozhenko considers a strong state synonymous with the rule of law and a social state.

THE IDEA of justice as fair governance has permeated Russian thinking since the Middle Ages, being based on Orthodox Christian and Western experience as seen from the standpoint of the rule of law [29]. The principle of justice is firmly established in the Russian public mind.

According to Prokhanov, justice is the basis of Russian history and is a "code word understandable to all peoples, to followers of all faiths, to a person belonging to any culture in the world" [22].

RUSSIANS and Belarusians, in speaking of justice in their own country, chiefly mean social justice. According to Valery Patsiorkovsky, this perceived social justice involves the form of equality that took

shape in the former Soviet Union, with its system of wealth distribution and its distinctions from liberal equality focused on the rights and needs of the individual [20, p. 6].

A study on Belarus's state ideology says that the Belarusian state's values include justice, mutual support, industriousness, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and non-acceptance of great-power chauvinism, and the state's philosophical basis is comprised of liberal, conservative, and socialist ideas. Some researchers argue that the national idea of Belarus is currently in flux, gravitating toward the notion of becoming a powerful state by integrating with Russia [28].

THE desire for a national idea in Russia and Belarus is an indication of the maturity of Russian and Belarusian society. Without an updated national idea, Russia risks being thrown back several centuries as a civilization project and a source of international influence. Belarus would then no longer be able to integrate with Russia and would dissolve in deideologized Eastern Europe.

Both Russia and Belarus have inherited Soviet ideological postulates, primarily the principle of social justice, which includes equality, wealth distribution by the state, accessible high-quality health care, and a general sense of security. Arguably, the main risk area in ensuring social security for the Union State is the chance of the Russian state redistributing wealth and income between the rich and the poor based on public consensus. Other hazards are legalized liberal practices in Russia and Belarus that conflict with the Soviet social justice model.

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Opportunities and Prospects for Education on WMD Nonproliferation and Arms Control in Russia

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Keywords: WMD nonproliferation; Russian education; Arms Control, Disarmament, and Nonproliferation; employment of graduates

IN RUSSIA, special attention has always been paid to education in the field of WMD nonproliferation, arms control, and nuclear policy. The Russian school is highly respected and in demand both at home and abroad. Over the past 10 years, universities both in the capital and in the regions have developed a whole range of specialized educational programs on these topics. However, the new reality has affected education as much as other areas and given rise to the need for comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of approaches to educational processes, including in this area.

This article is an attempt to formulate the existing lacuna and propose possible solutions for maintaining Russian expertise on the whole range of nuclear issues, which is undoubtedly a factor in strengthening our country's leadership potential in the international arena.

The year 2022 was in many ways a turning point for Russian education. In the wake of transformations that took place last year at the highest level, an announcement was made about the transition to

practical development of a national, “authentic” model of education. The need for such a model had been discussed for many years, primarily in verbal form, and any development in this area was fragmentary and slow.

According to the head of state, the country will gradually return to traditional ways of training specialists. This is also in line with the departure from the Bologna Process principles, announced in March 2022.

EDUCATION in the field of WMD nonproliferation, arms control, and nuclear policy is an area where the synthesis of the humanities and technical sciences could not be seen more clearly. The history of negotiations on these issues has repeatedly demonstrated how closely these two aspects are intertwined.

In order for an international relations student to graduate as a welltrained young professional, he or she ideally should possess powerful tools not only in the humanities, from the history and theory of international relations to the international political aspects of the WMD nonproliferation and arms control regime, but also in the technical sciences. A basic knowledge of nuclear physics, mathematics, and related disciplines will bring the aspiring “international relations and nonproliferation professional” to a completely new level.

EDUCATION in the field of arms control, disarmament, nonproliferation, nuclear policy, and related issues has traditionally been given special importance in Russia because of both the sensitivity of the issue and its special significance for the country.

It is significant that these specializations are being offered not only in the capital, but also at regional universities, including universities of federal importance. Some programs (at MGIMO and St. Petersburg State University) are taught in English and designed not only for the Russianspeakers, but also for foreign students.

GIVEN the specifics of the field, the breakdown of educational ties with the West has had a major impact on Russian nonproliferation and arms control study programs. In 2022, some of them – especially those that have traditionally had almost equal numbers of Russian and foreign students – faced a real problem of insufficient enrollment.

Reorientation and a pivot to other regions of the world, including in education, will take time. Building new interaction chains between universities, specific programs, and grant providers, including foreign ones, is not a quick process. However, it is important to note that the current problems in no way mean that these programs are becoming less popular. On the contrary, our country needs to train young professionals and future theorists and practitioners in this field now more than ever, and with a long-term perspective.

TO IDENTIFY the main obstacles that arise when seeking employment, it is worth first taking a step back and identifying potential employers for graduates with relevant training in Russia. The direct path to employment in the profession is with government agencies (Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rosatom, Ministry of Defense, and other agencies), research organizations (Center for Energy and Security Studies, PIR Center, Russian International Affairs Council), and the academic environment (universities, Institute for International Studies (IMI) of MGIMO, Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) of the Russian Academy of Sciences), and the media. At first glance, there are many potential job prospects. Nevertheless, there are additional issues that shape the overall situation.

Of course, it is impossible to expect that most graduates will be able to find a job directly in their profession after graduation. However, the trend is such that after graduation, it is primarily the young

professionals who graduated from Moscow universities affiliated with relevant departments who remain on the radar. The rest simply disappear from view.

The bottom line is that the arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation programs at affiliated universities are more privileged than similar study programs at regional universities, even those of federal importance. In this regard, it would be advisable to reflect on practical ways to overcome the aforementioned problem of the inequality of opportunities and consider practical solutions for how to accomplish this.

No less important is the possibility that representatives of relevant government agencies become more actively involved in the educational processes of relevant programs of federal universities in the regions.

RUSSIAN expertise in arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation has traditionally occupied a leading position in the world. This has always been openly recognized even by unfriendly countries. Our country still maintains significant authority in this area, and the Russian perspective is still in great demand. Today – in light of attempts by Western countries to use all possible means to discredit Russia in the international arena – it is extremely important to consistently strengthen this status. Systematizing processes and eliminating gaps in specialized education in the country are important steps toward achieving this goal.

It is important that students in Russian regions who are pursuing degrees in fields that are strategically important for the country are not isolated from but stay abreast with the actual development of Russia's foreign policy line and its related needs. Systematic training of young specialists in WMD nonproliferation, arms control, and nuclear policy is not only an opportunity to ensure the continuity of all the aforementioned processes and the Russian nuclear school, but a direct way to preserve and strengthen our country's leadership potential in this area in the international arena.

What Can Be Done to Motivate Young People to Take Up Painting as a Profession?

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Keywords: painting, young people, self-realization

THE answer that immediately jumps to mind is “nothing.” Clearly, this is largely an impulsive answer, but it has a basis in art history. Paul Gauguin became a full-time artist at the age of 42, before which there had been no obvious sign that he would choose that path.

Mikhail Vrubel became interested in natural sciences, history, and foreign languages in his early teens. He also studied music, attended theater performances, and later developed an interest in philosophy.

Pavel Fedotov had no drawing or painting instruction as a child or teenager. After a spell at the First Moscow Cadet Corps, where he had been enrolled by his father, he spent 10 years as a senior noncommissioned officer in the Finnish Life Guards Regiment. He was 29 when he left the Army and decided to devote himself to painting.

Wassily Kandinsky taught law and economics and was 30 when he became interested in French impressionism and made up his mind to become an artist. At the age of 34, he enrolled in the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich.

One could give a lot more examples, but we can already draw a preliminary conclusion. The point is that it is not so much a person who gets into painting as painting that gets into a person, pulling them out of their business, career, or family.

You can write poetry in your leisure time, but painting consumes you and usually gives you nothing in return – at least not in your lifetime.

All this is, in a sense, a preamble to the point I am going to make about choosing painting as a profession. It seems to me that one key factor is vocation. One needs to be able to hear it and follow it, giving up many current benefits: a good job, a promising career, a secure income. But vocation is not always heard – or followed if it is.

At any point in one's youth, there's a multitude of life paths to choose from. Everything depends on choices that are sometimes quite random.

The Russian system of art education, which comprises all tiers of instruction – preschool, elementary school, secondary school, and higher education levels – brings together hundreds of thousands of children and young adults. But it is in a sense a pyramid structure; preschool pupils make up the largest proportion of the total number of students in the system, and the higher up you go the fewer students remain in it.

Yet it seems to me that there is another reason, which over the past few years has become the dominant factor. Many young people have very short planning horizons, both for routine affairs and for their life as a whole. No matter what one says about the former Soviet education system, it gave young people an idea of what they could expect in their future. It also offered them ideas about paths to a successful future – studies, work, social activity. Today, the overall quality of life is immeasurably better than it was in the Soviet period, yet people still somehow have no clear ideas about their future.

In my contacts with young people, I notice that more and more of them are averse to making any long-term commitments, be it with respect to education, work, marriage. But art education is a lengthy and laborious process with no guarantee of success, high earnings, or a stable social status. This has always been and always will be the case. But there are young people who do choose this path, and we must support them, open the doors of galleries and exhibitions to them, and enable them to show their works at biennales and to participate in other projects.

Young people today have many more opportunities to make a career in art than their predecessors, but interest in this career must be supported.

“Today, Putin and Xi Jinping Simply Have Nothing to Talk About With the West”

Mikhail Delyagin, *Deputy Chairman, State Duma Committee on Economic Policy, member, Russian Intellectual Club, Doctor of Science (Economics). Interview by Vladimir Kozhemyakin*

Keywords: G20 Summit, Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, Joe Biden, BRICS

Today, Putin and Xi Jinping simply have nothing to talk about with the West. This is why countries that hope to “nibble” a few crumbs went to the summit for the sake of these crumbs, while countries that have taken the path of ensuring sovereignty sent their foreign ministers for the sake of propriety.

In any event, the Ukraine issue was pushed through, because Western representatives were present at the summit. But Zelensky's request was in fact rejected, in order to keep criminals away from the summit. It is one thing to talk about criminals in their absence but quite another to hear them speak. That would mean treating them as equals. And while Western leaders, who realize that they themselves are criminals, are quite happy to interact with Zelensky, the leaders of other countries have no need or desire to.

The G20 is a format created to put a brave face on the situation, because a bad peace is better than a good quarrel. From a strategic perspective, the G20 is unviable and will eventually come to an end, because the Western countries, too, have nothing to talk about with the other members of the G20. But decorum requires keeping it alive as long as possible.

Xi Jinping has other things to do, and his absence at the summit was a gesture of solidarity with Vladimir Putin. This is positive news for Russia, as well as for the G20.

The G20 has never regarded itself as a prototype world government. Even if someone did dream about this, it was clear that the fantasies of ignorant people could hardly be of interest to anyone else, except for psychologists and doctors. The world is breaking up into macroregions. This is quite obvious. And BRICS is one organization that is seeking to neutralize this objectively inevitable process – to slow down the breakup of the world and make it less destructive, but with a fundamental caveat: without renouncing their own interests. This caveat is important, because the breakup of the world could be slowed down Gorbachev-style, at the expense of one's own country. No one will do this anymore.

Politics determines the market structure. Politics dictates to economics. Politics is a question of power, of property ownership, while economics is a question of how ownership ensures income, how it distributes this income, etc. It is true that economics is the foundation of politics, but only philosophically speaking. In practice, it is not only power that grows out of the barrel of a gun, as Mao Zedong put it, but also money.

The G20 is not a meeting of finance ministers, representatives of national banks, or heads of major corporations from the respective countries. It is not an economic meeting, but a meeting of political leaders. It is a question of how to structure markets in a situation where integrated world markets are disintegrating. And no matter how much we take umbrage at people who destroy world markets at our expense, this process, unfortunately, is objective. It is subjective in each of its concrete expressions, but overall, if the markets were not being destroyed at our expense, they would be destroyed at someone else's. And discussions are taking place on the sidelines of the G20 behind closed doors about how the new markets will be structured, because many countries are in this sense "between mountains," and such a choice is unbearably painful for them.

The G20 is a discussion of nominally economic problems, but by political leaders from a political perspective, because when people are forced to eat insects and thus provoke cancer, this is not economics but politics.

When you talk about money, you talk about power. And if, when talking about money, you think you are talking only about money, you will be deceived. For example, you and I can earn a lot of money by working together. But whether this money will be in your pocket or in mine or whether it will be shared in proportion to our contributions is a matter of politics, not economics.

The main task of the Indians was to avoid a clash with the Americans so as not to worsen or downgrade relations with the US. Objectively, the Indians are competing more strongly with the Americans. But at the same time, they are accustomed to getting quite a lot from them. This is why today the Indians will be mastering the Chinese skills of obtaining American money and investment while depriving the

Americans of profits. This is also very interesting. I think that [Indian Prime Minister] Narendra Modi, as a very astute politician, is up to the task.

“Kostroma Is the Land of Russian Holy Places”

Olga Plyusnina, *Chair, Department of Theory and History of State and Law, Kostroma State University, Director, Stezya [Pathway] Pilgrimage Service*

Keywords: Kostroma, monasteries, festivals, Holy Lake

It is well known that Kostroma has traditionally evoked interest among tourists, and still does. For many people, even those from the Soviet era, the Ipatievsky Monastery is the cradle of the Romanov dynasty. Yet, it is necessary to understand that for a long time these unique and important sites for Russia were being erased from the memories of Kostromites and Russians in general.

We can talk about how our lands, both within Kostroma Province and in Kostroma itself, are home to a huge number of monasteries, churches, and holy springs that had been neglected under Soviet rule.

In our country, there was this phenomenon of monastic colonization. As I picture it to myself, an itinerant monk would arrive, settle in a remote area, and when people got wind of the miracles wrought by the powers of [his] prayer, they would begin to trickle to where he was. A city would form around him, and sometimes it even happened that this wandering monk, after establishing a monastery in one place, would continue further on his travels, settle again in a remote are, and there, too, a city would emerge. And there really are cities in our area that grew up around such monastery settlements.

We hold a festival for young Orthodox Christian compatriots whose ancestors emigrated but kept the Orthodox faith. They sang prayers that had been handed down from their grandmas and grandpas, but a little different from how we sing them.

There are official agencies that track how federal legislation on the preservation of historical monuments and culture is implemented. This is why [only] organizations that have permits are allowed to do restoration work. When we talk about the phenomenal things that are happening now with the Kostroma Kremlin – the rebirth of a holy place in a place where there had been nothing, or just an abandoned lot or a tennis court – we should note that new materials are being used for the restoration, but carefully, with maximum attention to detail. The project is being led by architect Alexey Denisov. Under his leadership, [historical] documents are being studied – and if there are no documents left that contain [relevant] information, if there are no photographs or descriptions, then the work is done with consideration of Kostroma’s traditions.

It seems to me that history becomes clear to someone once they perceive it as part of their personal history. And in order for us to be able to show guests not just a lovely picture, but to integrate them into this setting, we have been holding a few such large-scale events for a number of years now – this year is our sixth.

We also organize a creative festival of folk culture under the name “Russian Character.” Twice before the [COVID-19] pandemic, we put on festivals featuring battle reenactments on the Holy Lake near Kostroma, next to the Ipatievsky Monastery. That was the period when the lake regained its historical name: Holy Lake.

I’ve already mentioned the festivals, in particular the youth festival. Under its umbrella, we have the “Brothers” festival movement. This winter, some kids came to see us, and their level of interest was

palpable. The question is: To what degree can we adapt our programming to attract young people? On one hand, we can engage in missionary activity among young people. But, on the other hand, [we should] not pressure people too much, so that they can make their own choice.

“The Cypriots Have Always Been and Will Remain for Us a Friendly and Fraternal People”

Murat Zyazikov, *Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Cyprus.*

Keywords: Russia, Cyprus, the West, anti-Russian sanctions, tourism, Cyprus settlement

I have always thought it useful to sum up the intermediate results of any multilevel process, and my mission in Cyprus is no exception in this respect. I can definitely say that the past year has not been easy for Russia-Cyprus relations. The intense dynamics of domestic political events on the island, Nicosia's foreign policy activity in the Eastern Mediterranean region, and unfortunately, its involvement in the anti-Russian games of Western countries, have naturally affected our bilateral cooperation in some areas.

It is impossible to ban everything, especially when people have a deep need and, most importantly, a strong desire to cooperate and tap the rich historical potential of Russia-Cyprus cooperation.

Under the current conditions, when our trade, economic, and investment ties are the first to suffer from the sanctions, some Russian businesses have nevertheless been able to adapt to the new realities and have continued to operate successfully in Cyprus.

We are well aware, even without public opinion polls, that the anti-Russian orgy orchestrated by the West is unacceptable to most Cypriots. It is no exaggeration to say that ordinary Cypriots demonstrate their truly warm and welcoming attitude toward Russians and Russian culture just about everywhere, ranging from contacts in everyday life to the walls of public institutions.

It is obvious that throughout the long history of diplomatic relations and nine centuries of interaction between our countries, Russia and Cyprus have never seen each other as enemies, and I am sure they will not do so in the future. The Cypriots have always been and will remain for us a friendly and fraternal people. This is based on mutual sympathy between ordinary citizens, on the close historical, spiritual, and cultural ties that have arisen over the centuries. I do not think this friendship can be destroyed by temporary political vicissitudes or the unfortunate short-sightedness of forces swayed by anti-Russian hysteria. All crises end sooner or later. I am sure that our relations with Cyprus will not start from scratch but will build on the rich, decades-long experience of mutually beneficial cooperation for the good of our peoples.

Unfortunately, direct flights between our countries have been suspended, costing the island about 800,000 Russian tourists, and hospitality industry authorities make no secret of the major losses suffered by the local tourism market.

But what is probably most important is that, apart from obvious economic losses to Cyprus itself, there are now problems with elementary free communication between ordinary citizens of our countries.

It is known that Cyprus is regularly visited by representatives of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), an agency of the US Treasury Department that administers and enforces US sanctions (but then, the Americans have never made a secret of the fact that the Cypriot “partner” regulators are primarily

required to squeeze Russian capital out of the local market). It is also no secret in Cyprus that Western “technical advisers” for compliance with sanctions against Russia have settled in at the republic’s Ministry of Finance. Unfortunately, such is the current state of affairs.

Sometimes it gets to the point where banks refuse not only to open bank accounts for our compatriots, but also to close existing ones on flimsy pretexts, preferring to play it safe rather than risk angering the West. We regularly raise all these problems in our contacts with the Cypriot authorities. Hopefully, a reasonable and constructive approach will ultimately prevail in this area of our previously excellent relations with Cypriot partners.

We have always declared at the highest level our desire for continuity and stability in bilateral relations between Russia and Cyprus, as well as respect for the island’s territorial integrity based on UN Security Council resolutions. When Nikos Christodoulides won the presidential election in February 2023, I sincerely congratulated him in my capacity as head of Russia’s diplomatic mission and wished him success in this responsible post. Let me repeat that we are disappointed with Nicosia’s decision to join the illegal EU sanctions. We hope that the current Cypriot leadership has enough political foresight and will to retain the republic’s huge potential of traditionally respectful and constructive interaction with Russia.

Some media outlets have periodically tried to promote the narrative that Russia is allegedly ready to change its well-known position on the Cyprus settlement. Such speculations and provocative rumors do not reflect the actual situation and have only one purpose: to cast doubt on our country’s well-thought-out approaches to settling local and international conflicts based on strict compliance with the rules of international law and the UN Charter.

As for the island’s official authorities, given the close oversight from across the ocean, they certainly find it difficult today to maintain historically close and constructive relations with our country. While appreciating the difficulties they face, in the matter of transferring Russian military equipment and ammunition to Ukraine, we proceed from the axiom of Nicosia’s strict compliance not only with its contractual obligations to Russian manufacturers but also with European legislation banning exports of weapons to conflict zones. Such exports would certainly have negative consequences for Russia-Cyprus relations.

The embassy has traditionally paid much attention to close contacts with compatriots, to addressing their daily problems and their internal consolidation. Members of the Russian diaspora take an active part in official festivities at the embassy and often invite us to attend various cultural, educational, or charitable events in which they are involved. Additionally, I have always sought to find opportunities for informal meetings with people to see them personally, talk to them, hear out their concerns and problems, gauge their sentiments and expectations, and provide timely assistance.

The problem of providing proper consular services and protecting the rights and interests of our compatriots living in the north of the island has existed for several decades and has long needed a solution. Let’s take a brief look at the history of this problem.

In August 2023, we managed to turn that page of history by organizing weekly outreach sessions in the northern part of Nicosia to provide consular services to compatriots living in that part of the island. There are plans to extend office hours due to the growing number of applicants.

For our part – and I see this as one of my key tasks as Russia’s ambassador to Cyprus – we will do everything necessary to help implement useful public and educational initiatives proposed by our people living far away from home, to ensure their legitimate rights and protect their interests.

Vladislav Petrovich Terekhov (November 5, 1933-September 11, 2023)

AMBASSADOR extraordinary and plenipotentiary Vladislav Petrovich Terekhov passed away on September 11, 2023.

Vladislav Petrovich devoted his entire long, happy, and interesting life to serving his country. His name has undoubtedly gone down in the annals of Russian and Soviet history.

His life was a glittering path that always led upward.

In 1951, Vladislav Petrovich enrolled at the Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, where he specialized in the German-speaking countries. He climbed the diplomatic ranks from intern to ambassador while posted to Soviet embassies in Austria and West Germany, and at the Foreign Ministry in Moscow. During its turning-point years, he represented our country on one of its key diplomatic fronts. He recalled that when he left for Bonn in 1990 to take up ambassadorial duties, he could not foresee that, in the next seven and a half years he would hold three roles in succession – first as the seventh and last Soviet ambassador to West Germany, then as the first and last Soviet ambassador to united Germany, and finally as the first Russian ambassador to Germany.

Terekhov had a literary talent, the mind of a researcher, as well as a knack for teaching.

He was a friend of International Affairs and used to write significant, insightful, and interesting articles for it, naturally about Germany.

We have lost an outstanding diplomat, talented teacher, good person, and true friend.

Our sincerest condolences go to the family of Vladislav Terekhov.

We deeply mourn his passing.

The staff of International Affairs.

LETTER of Condolence to Vladislav Terekhov's Widow, Galina Mikhaylovna Terekhova, from Ambassadors Igor Bratchikov, Vladimir Grinin, Andrey Grozov, Dmitry Lyubinsky, Sergey Nechayev, Alexander Petrov, Vladimir Polenov, Dmitry Cherkashin, and Yevgeny Shmagin, and Envoys Oleg Krasnitsky, Fyodor Khorokhordin, Ivan Khotulev, and Sergey Maguta

DEAR Mrs. Terekhova,

It was with deep sadness that we learned of the passing of Vladislav Petrovich Terekhov.

Vladislav Petrovich was a prominent diplomat, a brilliant expert on German-speaking countries, our adviser, trustworthy colleague, and good friend. He followed the best traditions of the Russian diplomatic school.

Anyone who had the good fortune to know Vladislav Petrovich or be a colleague of his admired his dedication, professionalism, intelligence, erudition, integrity, and ability to make balanced, farsighted decisions and defend them courageously.

Throughout his wide-ranging diplomatic career, Mr. Terekhov played a remarkable role in advancing the interests of our country during the Cold War and after the unification of Germany.

Mr. Terekhov was a true patriot of Russia, a stalwart advocate of a powerful Russian state, and a very honest and wise person. It is hard to come to terms with the fact that he is no longer with us. His passing is a heavy, irreplaceable loss.

We deeply empathize with you during this time of sorrow. Please accept our sincerest condolences.

Vladislav Petrovich Terekhov will always be remembered.

Can You Step in the Same River Twice? An Eyewitness Account of the Chilean Drama

Vladimir Davydov, *Research Director, Institute of Latin American Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Department Head, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University), Associate Member, Russian Academy of Sciences; davydov@ilaran.ru*

Keywords: Chile, coup, Allende, Pinochet

THE 50th anniversary of the 1973 coup in Chile does not seem like an event from the distant past. One still thinks with a great deal of pain about the heavy human losses, flagrant violations of human rights, and glaring humiliations of human dignity that those events entailed. Such thoughts will be particularly poignant for people with first-hand experience of September 11, 1973, and its aftermath. The author of this article is one of them.

A DELEGATION of experts from the Soviet State Planning Committee (Gosplan), of which I was a member, arrived in Santiago for what proved to be a poorly timed visit. June 29 was Tancazo, the first mutiny – effectively a test revolt – in the Chilean military. A tank regiment rebelled, and its commanders tried to seize control of the Santiago international airport. The government was able to quickly suppress the mutiny, and it seemed that life was going to normalize. At least that was how it seemed to us, people who were planning to start work to help improve the economy of a friendly country and promote the cause of renewed socialism in South America. We were going to abandon stereotypes and dogmas and take full account of the distinctive Chilean environment.

The Gosplan experts were trying to piece together the economic (and naturally political) situation, and the Chilean hosts were helping them along. The situation was complicated, but accurate information from the Chilean statistical service clarified it – granted, not in every respect, but strictly speaking, the level of detail that we needed was not part of Gosplan's practice, either.

Obviously, the USSR, with its sense of solidarity with the Chilean leftwing president and government and the majority of Chile's people, who had been woken up by revolutionary expectations, was aware of a shaky equilibrium in Chile. It sought to support the Popular Unity government.

I think that the Nixon administration was doing its own calculations. Those calculations showed that Washington faced a difficult task. It did not appear possible to achieve quick and certain results through traditional political and economic support for the opposition.

First-hand observation and analysis of the 1973 coup showed that sophisticated use had been made of institutional methods and legal casuistry to block the Popular Unity government's activities and deprive it of any room for maneuver. The Popular Unity government's limited powers and inconsistencies made this possible. The main source of domestic sabotage is customarily considered to have been the legislative branch, but in reality, as was obvious in Santiago in the run-up to the coup, there were instances of anti-Popular Front activities in the executive branch, too, at both the national and municipal level.

I witnessed the revolutionary impatience of the masses in Chile who were demanding quicker nationalization of private companies whose management was accused (sometimes justly, and sometimes not so justly) of sabotaging or ignoring government decisions.

We can understand better today, having experienced the total lawlessness of sanctions, how declared and undeclared pressure works. It is obvious now that pressure mechanisms were used in Chile in the early 1970s, and very extensively, too. Payments were stalled and sensitive imports were hindered. This explains the numerous disruptions in the Chilean economy back then. But it was powerless to put an end to Popular Unity. A coup was needed to do that.

On September 11, we awoke to a cannonade. Warplanes were flying over us to bomb La Moneda, which was fighting back. Lists of people to be immediately arrested were being read out periodically on television. There were many familiar names on them. This was a psychological attack. There was shooting on the street down below – we were staying in a suite on the 11th floor – and dead bodies lay on the pavement. Some people later covered them with newspapers. Then gunfire broke out from above – from helicopters armed with heavy machine guns.

We experienced no close calls in those first days. We remained indoors, frantically destroying the countless documents in our possession (we had been working at the hotel since late August). Some of the documents might have gotten us into trouble. We had no contact with our embassy. Several days later, we were told to remain inside our suite, pending further instructions. It was unclear how or when we would be evacuated. We just had to fantasize about three potential ways: by an aircraft sent in by a neutral state, by one of our fishing vessels thought to be anchored in several Chilean Pacific ports, or by vehicles that would carry us to Argentina across the Andes.

A squad of soldiers was unsuccessfully trying to break into the CORFO headquarters through a barricaded door. Every attempt was rebuffed by heavy gunfire. Then a tank came up, fired, and made a breach, and the squad burst into the building through it. I was on the third floor and could see what was going on both below and higher up in the CORFO building. I can't describe my joy at seeing a group of young men and women climb onto the roof with their tiny carbines and flee, moving faster than the soldiers chasing them. I don't think I have ever been happier in my entire life!

They managed to escape, thank God. But thousands of others were killed in clashes or died in concentration camps or prisons. After that, tens of thousands of "politically unreliable" people would spend months in "preventive detention" in concentration camps. The junta was showing its teeth.

FINALLY, we got clarity about our immediate future: The embassy said we would be leaving on September 21. Our evacuation was a sight to see. A few buses picked us up in various parts of the city and then formed a convoy that set off through backstreets led by a car carrying the Indian ambassador, our security guarantor. Right and left all along our route stood chains of soldiers with rifles pointed at our buses. Behind the soldiers, people were gathering flashing the V sign, holding up clenched fists, or just greeting us with gestures. This kept our spirits up.

When democracy was restored in Chile, centrist and left-wing groups proved able to cooperate in seeking power and in governing the country. The long existence of the Concertación coalition and the electoral victories and successful presidential tenures of Socialists Ricardo Lagos and Michelle Bachelet testify to that. But it needs to be added that left-wing ideals have a substantial record of triumphs in Chile's more distant past.

On the whole, Popular Unity's platform was by no means a plan for a revolution. It was a blueprint for social and economic evolution. Let me repeat that Chile's left-wing forces have suffered two grave traumas. Hobsbawm's outburst in the Alameda underpass was a reaction to what had happened in the early 1990s, but he could not have been unaware of its reverberations in Latin American left-wing politics.

The Chilean government does have its problems. One of them is the unsuccessful outcome of a referendum to purge the constitution of remnants of Pinochetism. The issue remains on the national agenda. Will Chile once again adopt the ideals and values proclaimed and defended by Allende?

Will it be able to step in the same river twice? Yes and no. No, because new people have come. Yes, because unimplemented imperatives can stop this river from flowing freely and will have to be implemented sooner or later. In this sense, the past continues to live in the present. Memories of Allende will survive among Chileans not only in the present but also in the future. Mark Twain once said,

“History never repeats itself, but it does often rhyme.” If that is true, in Chile it rhymes almost as a refrain

How Emperor Nicholas II Helped Abyssinia, Siam, and South African States Defend Their Independence

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Keywords: Russia, Ethiopia, Thailand, South Africa, Emperor Nicholas II, independence struggle

A VAST body of historical sources confirms that in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Emperor Nicholas II and Russian diplomacy helped Ethiopia, Siam, and the Boer States avoid subjugation by Western colonialists. The Russian Empire had geopolitical interests of its own in these regions yet was never guided solely by them when aiding these countries.

It should be said that the policy that Emperor Nicholas II pursued in his relations with the aforementioned states was defined, albeit indirectly, as “anticolonial” even in the Soviet Union. The prominent historian and Orientalist Isidor Katznelson confirmed that in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Russia’s policy in Ethiopia “objectively helped preserve the integrity and independence” of this African state.

Still a young man, Emperor Nicholas II rejected what we call today the “psychology of colonialism” defined as the “inevitable law of progress” by Foreign Minister of the Third Republic Théophile Delcassé. [...] Nicholas II was of a different opinion. While visiting colonial possessions of Great Britain as a crown prince, he wrote to his father, Emperor Alexander III: “Englishmen think only of themselves and work solely for themselves and their own benefit.”

After ascending the throne, he remained loyal to his principles. This became especially obvious in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Russia defended Abyssinia (Ethiopia).

IN 1895, after a crude forgery performed by its diplomats, Italy, backed by Great Britain, launched an aggressive war against Abyssinia (Ethiopia). Back in 1889, Rome, invoking the Treaty of Wuchale of Friendship and Trade of May 2, 1889, had announced that it alone would henceforth represent Abyssinian interests on the world stage. The Italian ruling circles insisted that Ethiopia had allegedly recognized Italian leadership. In fact, Italian diplomats had falsified Article 17 of the Treaty. While the Amharic version said that the Ethiopian Negus “could rely on the Italian government,” 7 the Italian version stated that he “was obliged to rely on the Italian government”.

In Russia, Ethiopia was perceived as an Orthodox Christian country of great sacral importance. According to legend, the Ark of the Covenant was in Ethiopia, and the Ethiopian emperor was a direct descendant of King Solomon. In 1894, an expedition of the Russian Geographic Society was sent to Abyssinia. Natalya Malygina believes that it was a “military-political mission.

On June 30 (July 12), 1895, Emperor Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra Fedorovna received the Ethiopian delegation at the Great (Catherine) Palace in Tsarskoye Selo. Nicholas II described this day in his diary: “After the reports, Alix and I went to the Great Palace, where we received the Abyssinian embassy. Beautiful black people.... I received the Order of the Seal of Solomon in addition to several other presents.”

The Abyssinians were quite satisfied with the results: They carried back home “135 large boxes of rifles with ammunition and a large consignment of Zlatoust cavalry swords, while an imperial gift of 400,000 rubles of the tsar’s personal budget was gifted to Menelik personally.”

In March 1896, the Ethiopian Army defeated the Italians in the battle of Adwa. On March 30 (April 11), 1896, Russian Ambassador to Italy Alexander Vlangali informed Nicholas II by telegram that Foreign Minister of Italy Onorato Caetani had expressed his concern with Russia’s aid to Abyssinia, since it had stirred up negative feelings in Italian society that might cause the downfall of his cabinet. The Russian emperor wrote on the telegram [sarcastically]: “We really need to know Italian public opinion and be concerned about the fate of their ministries.”

Nicholas II personally supervised negotiations between the Ethiopians and the Italians. On October 4 (16), 1896, the Russian Telegraph Agency informed that a peace treaty in which Italy had recognized the independence of Ethiopia and had paid it indemnity had been signed in Addis Ababa.

In September 1897, Nicholas II dispatched to Menelik II an extraordinary diplomatic mission headed by State Councilor Pyotr Vlasov that included doctors, soldiers, and instructors. This was the first diplomatic mission sent by Russia to Black Africa. Having covered over 500 km of mountains and deserts, in early February 1898, it arrived in Addis Ababa, the new capital of Abyssinia founded by Menelik II. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were thus established.

After the victory over Italy, confidants of the Russian tsar became close advisers of the negus.

In 1893, France attacked the Kingdom of Siam (Thailand). It seized Laos lands from Siam to create a demilitarized zone 25 km wide and occupied Chanthaburi Province under the Bangkok Treaty of 1893. The Russian Empire was the only country that sided with Siam.

When King Rama V realized that France was planning to turn his country into a colony, he went abroad to seek the support of other European states in regulating relations between his country and France. [...] ...he personally offered Nicholas II to establish diplomatic relations between their countries. The tsar promptly agreed and invited him to Russia. In fact, they had been friends since 1891, when the future tsar, as crown prince, had been traveling across the East.

During the visit, Emperor Nicholas II and King Chulalongkorn agreed to establish diplomatic relations between the Russian Empire and Siam and to sign the Russian-Siamese Declaration of Jurisdiction, Trade, and Navigation (signed on June 11 (23), 1899); it was also agreed that Prince Chakrabongse would be educated in Russia at the Imperial Academy of the General Staff.

In 1899, two South African states – the Transvaal (South African Republic) and the Orange Free State with predominantly white populations (so-called Boers) – began a war against Britain that wanted to make them its colonies. The Russian public sided with the Boers. Incidentally, one out of every 10 people who lived in Johannesburg had Russian roots.

In April 1897, the Transvaal asked France to help it establish official relations with Russia.

Nicholas II closely followed the course of the war and rejoiced at the successes of the South African Army. [...] When talking to his sister Grand Duchess Xenia Alexandrovna, the emperor could not contain his joy over confirmed reports that two British battalions and a mountain battery had been taken prisoner by the Boers during a sortie of General White.

Meanwhile, in March-June 1900, having achieved considerable numerical and technical domination, Great Britain changed the course of the war. It captured Bloemfontein and Pretoria, the capitals of two Boer states and unleashed bloody terror against civilians. The British set up concentration camps (for the first time in human history) where they kept civilians and hostages, including women and children,

and people suspected of helping the insurrectionists. Approximately, 25,000 Boers and 14,000 aborigines, mainly women and children, died in these concentration camps.

Nicholas II could not remain indifferent to British barbarity. He asked Lamsdorf to come up with his ideas for possible diplomatic counteraction to the British aggression. On June 28 (July 11), 1901, Lamsdorf informed Russian Ambassador in Paris Prince Urusov that the emperor had come to the conclusion that all powers should ask Great Britain to “take all possible measures to lighten the hard lot of the South African Republics.” Nicholas II instructed Lamsdorf to send Wilhelm II a telegram to find out to what extent “he is ready to follow the Most Gracious initiative in the noble cause of intercession for the Boers.” Lamsdorf further wrote that the Kaiser had sympathized with the noble intentions of the emperor yet was convinced that success would be ensured only if all countries openly threatened Britain with war. Otherwise, “the German emperor is convinced that England will remain indifferent to the intercession of the powers for the Boers.” Thus, none of the European states supported Russia.

Some Milestones in the Biography of Boris Mansurov, Member of the Orthodox Palestine Society

Metropolitan Theodosius of Tambov and Rasskazov (born Sergey Vasnev), Rector, Tambov Theological Seminary, Candidate of Divinity, Doctor of Theology; admin@eparhia-tmb.ru

Keywords: Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, Jerusalem, Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, Russian pilgrims, Mount Athos

IN THE second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries, thanks to the activities of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem and the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society (IOPS), many land plots were acquired in various towns and villages of the Holy Land on which churches, compounds, abodes, hotels for pilgrims, and schools for children were built. Numerous Russian properties in the Holy Land were even referred to as “Russian Palestine.” After the end of the Crimean War (1853-1856), according to the Treaty of Paris of 1856, Russia lost the right to have a military fleet in the Black Sea.¹ At the same time, the Russian Empire could maintain and strengthen its presence in the Mediterranean Sea by organizing pilgrimages to Orthodox shrines of the East and establishing a Russian merchant shipping company and a seaport in Odessa for this purpose. Among the ideologists of this project was statesman, public figure, and member of the first council of the Orthodox Palestine Society Boris Pavlovich Mansurov, “one of the founders of the idea of a Russian presence in the Holy Land.”

BORIS Pavlovich Mansurov was born into a noble family in Moscow on May 12, 1828. In 1845, he graduated with a gold medal from the Imperial School of Jurisprudence and was given an appointment in the Senate. On June 17 of the same year, he was transferred to the General Assembly of the First and the Third Departments of the Senate, where he assumed the post of assistant to the secretary. In 1847, he was appointed Secretary of the First Department of the Senate. In 1848, Mansurov received the rank of collegiate assessor and 300 rubles in silver “for arranging auctions for alcohol tax farming in privileged provinces.”

In early 1855, the Grand Duke sent Mansurov to Sevastopol, where he was tasked with overseeing the organization of naval hospitals and the evacuation of wounded sailors.

UPON Mansurov’s return from Sevastopol, a new page of his biography began, closely connected with Palestine and Mount Athos. In December 1856, he undertook his first pilgrimage to Jerusalem to “collect necessary practical materials for a guide to the holy places.” This journey to the Orthodox East was a pivotal event in his life. Mansurov made six trips to Palestine between 1856 and 1884. His activities in

the Holy Land have been extensively researched. The focus here is on selected aspects of it – in particular, the plan to include St. Panteleimon Monastery on Mount Athos in the pilgrimage route from Russia to the Holy Land.

After returning home, Mansurov wrote a report “with proposals for setting up Russian pilgrimage infrastructure in the Holy Land.” He actively began to promote the idea of including Mount Athos in the pilgrimage route from Russia to Palestine. He was supported by the famous orientalist Archimandrite Porphyrius (Uspensky), the first chief of the Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem.

The first letter is dated August 1, 1858. It reports that an attempt to arrange for a pier on Athos was made in the early 1850s by Austrian businessmen, who even negotiated with the Protos on this matter, but were unsuccessful because they expected to profit from the project and demanded that the Athonites contribute financially to the upkeep of the pier.

Archimandrite Porphyrius advised Mansurov not to make any financial demands from the Athonite monasteries, as that would be futile, but, on the contrary, to conduct the matter in such a way that the Protos would see benefit in it for itself and, consequently, express interest in building a pier.

In the Tambov archive, the correspondence between Mansurov and Archimandrite Porphyrius concerning the construction of a pier and residence for Russian pilgrims on the Holy Mountain concludes with a letter from the Russian Athonites. The latter write that it was Mansurov who advocated opening a pilgrims’ residence, while they did not see any suitable pilgrim shelter on the island of Mulyani, as “this island is a total desert and a barren one: Even the most essential, vital subsistence needs are absent. It is possible to build a cistern there for water, but everything else: firewood, bread, and other things must be brought there.” The authors of the letter ask that special attention be given to the fact that the weather in these areas is very variable and windy. In the letter, the Athonites also disagreed with Mansurov’s idea to eliminate the involvement of secular and Turkish authorities in the affairs of the Holy Mountain, because “in this respect, it cannot be avoided.” This is the end of correspondence about the project to build a pier and a house for Russian pilgrims on the island of Mulyani.

Today, this island is called Ammouliani and is home to more than 500 people. In the 1920s, the Athonites planted figs, olive trees, and grapes there. All this points to the fact that Mansurov’s idea of building a pier and a house for Russian pilgrims, and therefore of expanding the Russian presence on the Holy Mountain, had a practical foundation and could serve the benefit of Orthodoxy.

After 1884, Mansurov stopped dealing with issues of “Russian Palestine.” Boris Pavlovich devoted 27 years of his life to the Holy Land. He worked passionately, with great interest and responsibility. People like him who were active in Palestinian affairs in the Orthodox East were called Palestinophiles at the time. According to a modern researcher, “the impossibility of influencing the situation in Palestine became one reason why in the last third of the 19th century B.P. Mansurov ceased to actively participate in the work of the Society.”³³ Despite their differences, Boris Mansurov’s colleagues recognized his undeniable service to Russia in establishing a large Russian presence in the Holy Land.

A Page From the History of Soviet and Russian Sports Diplomacy

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Keywords: Olympics, 1948, Soviet delegation, Gleb Baklanov, IOC, Sports Committee, USSR

SEVENTY-FIVE years ago, the way was opened for Soviet athletes to participate in the Olympic Games and in the activities of international sports federations.

Among landmarks in our sports history, a special place belongs to the visit of a Soviet delegation to the Summer Olympic Games in London in 1948.

Contacts made during that visit paved the way for our participation in the 1952 Olympics and in various other international competitions, including world and European contests in key events.

What happened during that visit was remarkable, and we can learn some lessons from it in the light of problems caused to our country today by the Western anti-Russian line.

After the 1917 revolution, the unfriendly policies of the US, Britain, and some other countries barred our country from participating in Olympics and international championships for more than three decades.

Thus, today's Western sanctions are not our first experience with Western punitive measures. Our country certainly had good sports traditions, and sports developed stably in it even during our isolation from international sports, but keeping sports going was not easy in the Soviet Union. Carefully planned and large-scale work by enthusiasts made it possible.

On May 25, 1919, Moscow's Red Square hosted the Soviet Union's first sports parade, which was an event of tremendous proportions. The Soviet sports movement grew by leaps and bounds. The total membership of Russia's prerevolutionary sports clubs did not exceed 50,000, but by the late 1920s, the number of athletes in the USSR ran into the millions. Russia's largest prerevolutionary stadium had 3,000 seats. Dynamo Stadium, built for the first All-Union Sporting Games of 1928, could seat 40,000.

The Soviet leadership was taking effective though not widely publicized measures to collect information on the most efficient foreign sports training methods, and our athletes aspired to meet the highest world standards. A resolution issued in September 1929 declared physical education and sports a national priority.

During the Great Patriotic War, physical training was naturally focused on skills that were needed in warfare, such as shooting, hand-to-hand combat techniques, and skiing. But general sports did not come to a halt in those years.

The Soviet leadership was majorly disappointed with the international political and economic bodies that the Soviet Union joined after World War II and was dissatisfied with their initial results. For example, having made a decisive contribution to the victory over Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union was far from always able to advance its vision of international problems in decision-making processes at the UN. Many UN member states were under Western influence. We tried to counter Western policies by launching a large-scale antiwar public movement and using antiimperialist sentiments, but these activities met with stiff resistance from Western elites.

Our initial postwar sports contacts produced good results. A team of Moscow's Dynamo soccer club won four matches in Britain in 1945. In 1946, Soviet weightlifters won first place in two weight classes in competitions in France. In the same year, our track-and-field athletes performed well at international competitions in Oslo. But effectively, those were tests. They showed that our athletes were capable of holding their own with foreign competitors despite years of isolation. However, at the Olympics, unofficial team point counts included all events, and that, of course, would have hindered the evaluation of the USSR's overall performance.

My father, Lieutenant General Gleb Baklanov, Hero of the Soviet Union, was invited to the conference as head of the Ground Forces physical training and sports administration and as a member of the All-Union

Committee on Physical Education and Sports. After a long discussion, Stalin announced a decision to send a team of 10 to 12 specialists to the London Olympics. He named Baklanov head of the delegation.

Baklanov was told that the delegation was expected to draw clear conclusions about whether the USSR should join the Olympic Movement, whether Soviet athletes should take part in the next Olympics of 1952, and what needed to be done to raise Soviet sports standards. Baklanov was also instructed to decide on the ground whether the Soviet Union should join individual sports federations, and if it should, to start preparations for this.

The Olympics brought together 4,689 athletes from 59 countries. This was fewer than subsequent Olympics, but these were the first postwar Games, and by postwar standards, were a huge event.

The delegation took note of various organizational aspects of the Olympics. For instance, the Soviet visitors liked the collapsible spectator stands that were erected in the various event halls that had previously not hosted sports competitions. However, they said that there had not been too much in the athletes' performances that was a revelation to them.

The delegation's general impression was that, after some training, Soviet athletes would be able to meet even the highest international standards. Successful negotiations were held with some international associations. The USSR was assured that Soviet athletes would be able to join those associations and take part in all competitions run by them. But there were exceptions, too.

Urbanovich's talent created a furor. She was asked by the administration of Stockholm's largest sports center to give demonstration performances at the center. She agreed. Her performances were met with wild applause and praised by the press.

Soviet athletes made a very successful debut at the XV Olympics in Helsinki in 1952. The Soviet team tied with the Americans in the unofficial team point count. Soviet athletes participated in all events except field hockey. The Soviet team took first place in gymnastics, freestyle wrestling, Greco-Roman wrestling, shooting, and weightlifting events, and took second in track-and-field events, boxing, and rowing.

Altogether, our athletes won 71 medals in Helsinki – 22 gold, 30 silver, and 19 bronze. The Americans won 76 medals – 40 gold, 19 silver, and 17 bronze. The Hungarians, who came in third in the unofficial point count, won 42 medals.

Our sports received such a boost in those years that at the XVI Olympics in Melbourne in 1956, the Soviet team was first in all events. In the unofficial point count, the Soviet team won 98 medals – 37 gold, 29 silver, and 32 bronze. The US was second with 74 medals – 32 gold, 25 silver, and 17 bronze.

Our athletes gained a lot of experience and overcame difficulties, including Western policies against us. There can be no doubt that this experience can help us cope with problems in our present-day international sports activities as well. Russian athletes will again and again prove their high standards and consolidate their prestige and high global status.

A Prologue to the Debut on the Sixth Continent

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Keywords: Antarctica, Russian South Pole expedition, Mirny, International Geophysical Year, USSR Academy of Sciences' Integrated Antarctic Expedition, territorial claims in Antarctica

ON FEBRUARY 13, 1956, the first Soviet Antarctic station Mirny was opened on the shore of the Davis Sea. The station got its name from the sloop Mirny that participated in Russia's 1819-1821 South Pole expedition. Its crew members became the first people on the planet to see and map the icy shores of the mysterious Terra Australis. A capsule with soil from Stalingrad's Mamayev Kurgan, which is sacred to our people, was laid at the base of the station flagpole on which the Soviet national flag was raised. These symbolic acts testified to the inseparable connection between generations of Russian trailblazers, victorious heroes of the Great Patriotic War, and the country's postwar generation. This was how our country made its debut on the sixth continent after a more than a century-long hiatus.

The prologue to the opening of the first Soviet station in Antarctica lasted 135 years. The prolonged loss of state interest in the South Pole region is usually attributed to the indifference that government circles in tsarist Russia showed toward this corner of the planet, as well as the significant difficulties that the Soviet state faced in implementing administrative and organizational measures to strengthen the country's economic and defense capability in the prewar years.

THE results of World War II thrust the USSR into a leading position in the world community. The Soviet Union successfully closed the nuclear weapons gap with the US in four years, emerging as one of the world's two superpowers. In the postwar years, a major political, economic, and military confrontation arose between the leaders of the capitalist and socialist blocs – the US and the USSR, respectively. Meanwhile, ideological rivalry over influence over third world countries, which were beginning to actively shake off colonial rule [4], came to a head. And at the same time, ownership issues regarding the Antarctic continent were coming to the fore, so the USSR could not stand on the sidelines on these issues.

In 1945, the year of victory in World War II, the Leningrad-based Arctic Research Institute (ARI), part of the Main Administration for the Northern Sea Route, marked its 25th anniversary. In July 1945, Vladimir Wiese, chairman of the ARI Academic Council and corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, in a short article titled "Soviet Research Projects in Antarctica," stressed the need for comprehensive studies of the Antarctic Ocean and atmosphere. To that end, he proposed establishing a research station on Alexander Land and, in the future, also at the Geographic South Pole. He believed that the second station should be established with the use of aircraft. Wiese substantiated the economic feasibility of Soviet activity in Antarctica by citing the need for whaling in polar waters.

In 1948, the US State Department invited Australia, Argentina, New Zealand, Norway, Great Britain, France, and Chile to participate in an international conference on establishing an international legal framework for Antarctica.

The USSR was not invited, even though in the postwar years our country not only hunted whales in Antarctic waters but also carried out extensive marine research there. The Soviet Union, as one of the main victorious powers in World War II, could not possibly have ignored that. [...] The Soviet authorities decided to bring in experts to formulate a response to the US initiative.

In 1951, this international body proposed considering the US project at the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), which actively supported it and recommended extending it worldwide, including all continents and oceans. The WMO also expanded the geophysical research program with meteorological, oceanographic, geological, geodetic, and biological projects. As a result, the International Geophysical Year (IGY) project was created.

It is worth mentioning that at the time our country was not yet an ICSU member. On April 12, 1946, Academicians Sergey Vavilov and Nikolay Bruevich sent a letter to the chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Joseph Stalin, with a proposal that the USSR Academy of Sciences join the ICSU after receiving an official invitation from the organization's chairman. Despite the positive response to the proposal from prominent Soviet political figures, the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee did not give its approval [5]. However, understanding the leading role of Soviet science in various fields of knowledge about natural processes on Earth, the international community invited our country to participate in such a major scientific research project as the IGY. In the spring of 1955, the ICSU president gave the Soviet ambassador in London a letter with another invitation to join the ICSU. The process was officially completed in the fall of 1955.

On December 22, 1954, USSR Academy of Sciences president Alexander Nesmeyanov; the minister of the USSR Maritime Fleet, Viktor Bakayev; the minister of the USSR Fishing Industry, Alexander Ishkov; and the acting head of the Main Administration for Hydrometeorology of the USSR Council of Ministers, Makar Ivanov, sent a letter to First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Nikita Khrushchev with a proposal to organize a Soviet Antarctic expedition in 1955. It described in detail the political situation that had developed around the sixth continent following the publication of the Soviet government's memorandum on Antarctica of June 7, 1950, as well as the practical goals and objectives to secure national interests in Antarctica by conducting comprehensive studies of the continent and surrounding seas. It proposed combining the work of the expedition with Soviet participation in research projects as part of the IGY program. To this end, plans called for establishing three permanent geophysical observatories in Antarctica, one of which would be located at the Geographic South Pole.

On June 15, 1955, the CPSU Central Committee proposed that the USSR Academy of Sciences apply to the IGY Special Committee to participate in the IGY program within the framework of the integrated Antarctic expedition that was being created.

The participation of the USSR in the IGY was more a pretext than a reason for the USSR's interest in activities in Antarctica.

On September 16, 1955, the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences adopted a resolution establishing the Council for Antarctic Research. Academician Ivan Bardin, vice president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, was appointed its chairman.

The military-political confrontation at the start of the Cold War between the USSR and the US sharply escalated. In this context, the US sought to exclude our country from the discussion of issues related to building an international legal framework for Antarctica. As a result, in 1950, the Soviet government issued a memorandum stating its political position on Antarctica.

An analysis of various archival materials from 1954 and subsequent years shows that our country came to Antarctica for the long term, not just to participate in one scientific project, such as the IGY. The Antarctic expedition pursued the Soviet Union's political and economic interests in the region. The USSR, one of the main victors in World War II, could not possibly forgo having a hand in managing the Antarctic continent and tapping its mineral and hydrocarbon resources, as well as the biological and aquatic reserves of the Southern Ocean in its own geopolitical interests (in the 1950s, this term was banned in the domestic political lexicon).

Other countries that sent their national expeditions to Antarctica between 1955 and 1957 took similar approaches toward organizing their activities in the region.

Starting with Mirny, Russia currently has five scientific stations¹ in Antarctica that operate year-round; preparations are underway to reopen the Russkaya station² on the continent's Pacific coast that was mothballed in 1990; and a large-scale project is under way to modernize the continental station Vostok.

On December 26, 2022, the Russian government approved state funding for the design and construction of a new 20 MW scientific expeditionary vessel to support the Russian Antarctic Expedition. All these facts, which testify to Russia's revived strategic interest in the southern polar region since the 1990s, show that our country "has come to Antarctica to stay."

The Dynamics of History, or Unity in Diversity

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Keywords: Vladimir Shveytser; Russia, Europe, the World; essay-style monograph

ESSAY-STYLE monographs are a unique academic genre. The genre is used quite rarely, and the phrase "for the general reader" is an entirely appropriate description for it. Essay-style monographs typically address several topics and aim to link together several storylines and sometimes completely different topics. One can read either individual chapters or the whole book. Reading the entire book would inevitably put the reader in the shoes of a critic.

In May 2023, well-known Russian historian and political scientist Doctor of Science Vladimir Shveytser, chief researcher of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Europe and head of the institute's Department of Social and Political Studies, released an essay-style monograph titled *Russia, Europe, the World** [in Russian]. I would highly recommend reading it for at least one very simple reason.

Shveytser is one of those scholars whose choice of research field was determined by personal and social experience. Shveytser's family background, upbringing, and education made him imbibe several intellectual cultures – the culture of the prerevolutionary Russian nobility, of the postrevolutionary Russian intelligentsia, of the Soviet intelligentsia of the Thaw period, and of post-Soviet Russia. A blend of this kind will produce an interesting personality and make a historian and political scientist stand out in their profession.

From the book's six chapters ("The USSR and Germany: Postwar Geopolitical Realities," "Diplomacy and Politics in the Run-Up to the War," "World War II: The Unknown about the Known," "Austria and Its Leaders in Postwar World Politics," "The Development of the Russian Multiparty System," and "People and Governments in the Contexts of Various Eras") and 17 sections, three core themes can be discerned: the problem of the unity of large countries, the development of political parties, and the role of the individual in history.

Joseph Stalin "clearly opted for a policy of equidistance from the fascist aggressors in Europe and Asia and nonaggressive democrats on both sides of the Atlantic" (p. 30). A potential military conflict between imperialist countries was given significant importance in Stalin's vision of a limited "second imperialist war." "In a sense," Shveytser says, "the Anschluss [Germany's annexation of Austria] aligned with the USSR's geopolitical interests as the strengthening of the economic, military-industrial, and human resources of Germany at the expense of Austria could turn Germany westward" (p. 80).

Shveytser cites an interesting interpretation of the Katyn events that he heard from Lieutenant General Leonid Raykhman of the security service and apparently concurs with.

Shveytser also describes another project of Beria's that the NKVD chief developed on April 21, 1953, at a "working meeting of senior officers of Department 12, which was in charge of monitoring information from various sources about sentiments in the diplomatic corps in Moscow" (p. 86). Shveytser believes

that this project aimed to “somewhat clean up” the Soviet Union’s image for potential cooperation with the West.

Shveytser claims that the Russian party system is continuing to develop and that “the struggle between old and new is not winding down, as attempts are constantly being made to weave old though somewhat renewed authoritarian content into new, democratic forms of government” (p. 145). For this reason, Shveytser recommends paying more attention to “the need to find a balance between various components of the national political field” (p. 172).

Today, the successful development of a country depends on the ideas, skills, and talents of individuals. For this reason, it is imperative to analyze the role of the individual in history, and this is Shveytser’s third core theme. Shveytser successfully connects the political aspect of this theme with its family aspect

On one hand, Shveytser’s points about Kreisky confirm Kissinger’s conclusions, but on the other, Shveytser goes further and emphasizes that personality is shaped by culture. He logically weaves stories about his parents and other members of his family into the fabric of his analysis. These stories add a lot of value to the book.

By choosing the essay-style monograph genre, Shveytser prompts the reader to reflect and possibly disagree with him. I believe the average reader is more optimistic than Shveytser about the recent eastward swing in Russia’s foreign policy and may take issue with his point that “the eastward reorientation will hardly be the strategic paradigm for our country,” though admittedly, “it is impossible to change a country’s history and especially its geography through a change of labels, no matter what confrontations take place in international relations” (p. 173).

The Last Envoys of the Russian Empire: An Ageless Chronicle of Diplomatic Vicissitudes

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Keywords: Russian Empire, ambassadors, book

BY EARLY 1900, the Yihetuan (Boxer) Rebellion had grown, acquired aggressive overtones, and threatened the lives of Russian diplomats. Empress Dowager Cixi and some of her courtiers took refuge in the Embassy Quarter. Mikhail von Giers, Ambassador of the Russian Empire to China, together with the staff of the mission that found itself in the line of fire, had to resort to armed defense. The siege lasted two months.

In reward for his courage, the ambassador, a civilian by definition, was presented with the Order of St. Anne 1st Class with Swords – a combat award usually reserved for military personnel. “Modest, quiet, even shy, Mikhail Nikolayevich [von Giers] could become a daring hero in moments of danger, taking responsibility in a complex situation and making extraordinary decisions,” writes Yelena Yevdokimova, author of the recently published monograph *The Last Envoys of the Russian Empire* [in Russian], about this little-known episode.

The shot in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, that ended the life of heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne Franz Ferdinand von Este did not necessarily have to automatically lead to the outbreak of a pan-European massacre.

However, a series of unfortunate events seemingly caused by human error made war inevitable. One of those events is associated with Ambassador of the Russian Empire to Germany Sergey Nikolayevich Sverbeyev, who failed to properly assess the ramifications of the murder of the heir to the throne and at that moment left his Berlin residence for a vacation at his estate in Russia. As the author of the book summarizes: "In those days, when it was still possible to take some steps, our ambassador was away."

Ambassador Sverbeyev's bungling behavior in the force majeure situation remained a shameful stain on his biography. As Yevdokimova writes, "One can only imagine the hail of accusations of inaction, carelessness, and short-sightedness that rained down on him; because even in the memoirs of fellow diplomats, few had a kind word for Sverbeyev."

The opinions of the ambassadors, despite their high status and the subsequent use of the epithets "extraordinary and plenipotentiary" before their titles, were not always welcome in the court, both literally and figuratively.

A remarkable confession by Izvolsky himself regarding the cold reception he received in St. Petersburg can be found in his memoirs: "I had a reputation as a 'liberal' at the Court in Tsarskoye Selo." It seems that, despite the disparity between the meaning of the term "liberal" then and today, it continues to hold the original, mostly negative connotation.

The work of a researcher always involves selecting facts and opinions. It resembles the work of a sculptor who, following the tenets of Michelangelo and Rodin, takes a piece of marble and removes all that is unnecessary. This is why the verbal portraits of Russian top diplomats are expressive, sometimes unreservedly complimentary, often caustic and mocking, enabling the careful sculpting of multidimensional and complex characters who are contradictory, much like history itself.

Nicholas II, as evident from the book, stood up for his ambassador in London, Alexander Konstantinovich von Benckendorff, after a complaint from German Kaiser Wilhelm II, who was the tsar's second cousin. The Kaiser found out that the ambassador had allegedly become a confidential intermediary in secret negotiations in Copenhagen between Moscow and London and sent an angry missive to Russia.

This book merits a friendly reading due to its indisputable qualities. The first one is veracity, since all the facts, statements, and comments by diplomatic "movers and shakers" are supported by references to primary sources (the bibliography in three languages spans almost 12 pages).

The book also offers a meticulously crafted narrative sequence that immerses readers in the atmosphere of that transitional era, enabling them to sense the mindset of the "tsar's people" who, in the early 20th century, defended the state's interests during the initial reshaping ("disintegration" might be a more apt expression) of the Western-centric colonial world order.

It is worth noting that the chronicler – and Yelena Yevdokimova is indeed the chronicler of this passionate and extravagant yet checkered era (in European history, La Belle Époque, or the "Beautiful Era," lasted from 1871 to 1914) – could not help but infuse the text with emotional nuances that inevitably reflect the author's view of the subject. History, especially when personalized and presented through portraits of the figures on the diplomatic stage, inevitably evokes a wide range of emotions, from ardent admiration to fervent disapproval or even perplexity upon comprehending the gaps in one's knowledge of people and customs.

It is worth noting that, in her own words, the author collected material for the book "with reverent awe, while studying unique documents in the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire." Such awe indicates not just a caring person but someone who has absorbed the spirit of the time when blowing off the archival dust from documents of that era.

What sets *The Last Envoys of the Russian Empire* apart is not only its factual accuracy and appropriate narrative tone but, most importantly, the simple yet lofty idea embedded in this work of the continuity of time.

From the Present Into the Past

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Keywords: A.V. Fenenko, monograph, pre-Westphalian era, history of international relations

THE publication of a textbook by Alexey Fenenko for university students on the history of international relations in the pre-Westphalian era, released by Aspekt Press, has significantly enriched existing scholarship on this subject. Essentially, this is a monograph in a textbook format. One objective of this study, according to its author, is to provide an understanding of the logic of interstate relations in the period before the emergence of nation-states.

Fenko's work is inherently innovative. It fills a significant gap in scholarly research on the history of international relations. The overwhelming majority of textbooks and scholarly works on this topic tend to begin with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, achieved after the prolonged Thirty Years' War on the European continent.

Fenko's research is innovative in many respects. The author constructs a theoretical generalization of the historical process in antiquity, the Middle Ages, and early modern times from the perspective of relations between the state formations of those periods. Additionally, he identifies and delineates the activities of agents of international relations – empires. Fenenko's research is also valuable in that he uses historical evidence to illuminate the turning point in the development of international relations.

Nothing in this world is static. Bringing in rich historical material, the author shows the collapse of the empires and the incipient prerequisites for the emergence and formation of new state entities – nation-states.

Fenko also traces the evolution of the statehood factor and the shape it takes in international relations.

The author emphasizes that while we use “world order” as a category in the context of the Westphalian system to mean a set of rules and norms that govern interactions between system participants, this category does not apply to international relations in the pre-Westphalian era for several reasons. These reasons include the fact that during that time, states did not possess stable territories and institutions.

The author views the “pre-Westphalian era” as a convenient moniker for international relations that preceded the emergence of nation-states (p. 8). He defines “relations between states in the pre-Westphalian era” as the formation of imperial spaces, competition among political entities within empires, and interactions among different imperial entities (p. 19).

The author argues that the pre-Westphalian period was crucial for the formation of most modern states and the emergence of conflicts between them. Understanding many contemporary conflicts, such as those between Russia and Poland, France and Germany, China and Japan, is impossible without knowledge of the pre-Westphalian era when these conflicts originated.

The author's final note is quite remarkable and requires consideration from the perspective of international relations theory, especially since the author invokes the "fashionable theory of replacing classical international relations between nation-states with global politics" (p. 13).

An unquestionable strong point of the reviewed monograph is its extensive coverage of imperial-style relations between states spanning the Middle East, the Mediterranean, Central and East Asia, as well as Western Europe. Its exploration of Eurasia in the broad sense, encompassing the Great Silk Road connecting East and South Asia with the Mediterranean, gives it significant contemporary relevance. The historical material is analyzed through the lens of international politics.

In general, readers interested in international affairs, and not just students, have received a comprehensive study of the pre-Westphalian period constructed upon rich historical material. This stands as a significant academic achievement by the pioneer who examined that era from an international relations perspective. In my view, the monograph is very persuasive. Historians may possibly find some discrepancies in the historical processes under analysis. From the standpoint of international relations history, a substantial gap has been (mostly?!) bridged. However, certain methodological and theoretical questions remain. As mentioned earlier, these considerations, first and foremost, allow room for discussion (the field of international relations is relatively young, and the vast array of diverse theories and trends underscores this fact). Second, these concerns do not in any way diminish the scholarly value of the textbook monograph by A.V. Fenenko. One cannot fail to concur with the author's view that "many interesting and significant problems in the history of international relations still remain unresolved by scholars" (p. 11). For the sake of completeness, let's add that many interesting and significant problems in their theory also remain unresolved.