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Ambassador Kazimirov: From Hungary to Venezuela, From Karabakh to Costa Rica – Vignettes From Stories Told by Himself

S. Ryabkov

Keywords: Ambassador V.N. Kazimirov, vivid storyteller, biographical sketches

SERGEY RYABKOV'S portrait of Ambassador Vladimir Kazimirov is a vivid collection of biographical "vignettes" illustrating the life of one of Russia's most colorful diplomats. Each episode showcases Kazimirov's courage, creativity, and deep sense of duty, revealing the human side of diplomatic service.

The narrative begins in Budapest, 1956, where the young intern experiences the Hungarian uprising firsthand. Amid chaos and gunfire, Kazimirov demonstrates ingenuity and composure – once even delivering an urgent message to Prime Minister Imre Nagy, and later retrieving a stray bullet as a "souvenir" of the revolution. These early experiences forged his reputation for calm under fire.

In Costa Rica (1972), Kazimirov faces a different challenge: fierce anti-Soviet protests organized by pro-American circles and émigré groups as the USSR opens its first embassy in Central America. To outmaneuver opponents, he secretly arrives without prior notice, thwarting planned demonstrations. His inventive diplomacy later continues when, as Russian ambassador in the 1990s, he devises a creative solution for extending Moscow's presence in Guatemala through shared embassy staff – a model now replicated elsewhere.

As presidential envoy to Nagorno-Karabakh (1994), Kazimirov's pragmatism proves decisive. Faced with Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Stepanakert all agreeing to a ceasefire but refusing to sign together, he engineers a "Solomonic" compromise:

each side signs its own copy, which he then unites into a single trilateral accord. His approach prevents renewed bloodshed and demonstrates how practical creativity can achieve peace where rigid formality fails.

Finally, in Venezuela (1978), Kazimirov shows political intuition by bypassing a potentially sympathetic foreign minister and reporting corruption directly to President Carlos Andrés Pérez, who quietly removes the offending ambassador.

Ryabkov closes with reflection rather than eulogy. Through humor, composure, and loyalty, Kazimirov emerges as a patriot who used all his talents in defense of the Motherland — a professional for whom diplomacy was not only negotiation but an art of courage and improvisation.

**On the Fate of the Russian World: Faith, Language, and the Spirit of the
People – From Correspondence With a Friend, Historian, and Eastern Studies
Expert**

A.Oganesyan

Keywords: Russian World, Orthodoxy, Christianity, Gospel, Holy Scripture, New Testament, Universal Church, guardian angel

ARMEN OGANESYAN, editor-in-chief of International Affairs, presents a philosophical meditation on what constitutes the “Russian World” – a dialogue on faith, language, and spiritual identity. Drawing on literary and religious thinkers, he explores whether Russianness is defined by ancestry, speech, or something deeper: the spiritual worldview rooted in Orthodoxy.

The discussion begins with Vladimir Dal’s idea that nationality is not determined by blood or even language, but by the “spirit and soul.” Oganesyan partially agrees but expands the argument, noting that action, art, and emotion also reveal national character. He cites Fr. Pavel Florensky, who viewed the word as “the highest manifestation of the soul’s life,” and argues that the Russian spirit exists even beyond the Russian language – for instance, among émigrés or converts who embody Orthodoxy’s ethos despite thinking in English or French.

Oganesyan challenges secular reductionism by asserting that faith – especially Orthodox Christianity - has been Russia’s central civilizational force. Citing Georges Florovsky, Georgy Fedotov, and Muslim philosopher Musa Kurbanov, he emphasizes that Orthodoxy shaped not only Russian worship but also thought, ethics, and collective identity. The Gospel, translated into Slavic tongues, permeated everyday consciousness far more deeply than Latin Christianity did in Western Europe.

The essay proceeds to defend the legitimacy of national diversity within Christianity. Rejecting Svetlana Alexievich’s claim that national identity is

meaningless before God, Oganessian insists that divine creation values plurality: nations, like stars, “differ in glory.” Each has a guardian angel and a unique spiritual mission – an idea echoed by Vladimir Solovyov’s belief that the “idea of a nation is what God thinks of it in eternity.”

He then warns against globalist homogenization, contrasting the “blooming complexity” of God’s creation (per Konstantin Leontiev) with the flattening tendencies of Western liberal universalism. The “Russian World,” he argues, is not an expansionist project but a spiritual radiance – a culture capable of reaching hearts across boundaries because it is detached from materialism and rooted in faith.

Oganessian concludes that Russia’s strength lies not merely in language or power but in its spiritual magnetism – the ability of Orthodoxy and the Russian soul to unite diversity under a transcendent moral ideal. The essay reads as both a theological reflection and a quiet manifesto for cultural sovereignty amid the forces of globalization.

The Odyssey of the Global Economy in Search of the Golden Fleece

THIS ARTICLE outlines Igor Sechin's analysis of the global energy sector and the transformations reshaping the world economy. Presented as a keynote address at SPIEF-2025, the report portrays energy as the true foundation of human progress – and warns that the so-called “green transition” may threaten stability and growth if pursued ideologically.

Sechin argues that the digital and AI revolutions are driving unprecedented energy demand, with data centers and cryptocurrencies consuming electricity on a par with industrial nations. As populations and urbanization surge in Asia and Africa, the world's appetite for power is projected to double within 25 years, largely satisfied by fossil fuels and nuclear energy.

He contends that “net-zero” policies ignore physical reality: energy density, not ideology, determines progress. Fossil fuels and nuclear power, he notes, have far greater output per area than wind or solar. Attempting to replace them outright would mean energy regression. Despite trillions spent on renewables, their share in the global mix has risen only modestly – proof that the transition, as promoted by Western elites, is economically irrational.

The speech highlights China's pragmatic model – investing in renewables while simultaneously expanding coal and nuclear capacity to secure energy independence. India follows a similar path. The United States, under new leadership, is shifting back toward traditional energy sources after a failed experiment in over-subsidized “green” projects.

Russia, meanwhile, is presented as a strategic stabilizer: a nation with complete control over the nuclear fuel cycle, vast hydrocarbon and mineral reserves, and a proven record of technological innovation (e.g., fast neutron reactors, floating nuclear plants). Sechin asserts that the Russian economy has withstood sanctions

and now outpaces global growth, underscoring the resilience of a resource-based model grounded in national sovereignty.

The report concludes that the world is entering a new energy era – one defined not by ideology but by realism, competition, and resource efficiency. “Our cause is just,” Sechin declares, echoing wartime rhetoric to frame economic endurance as moral victory.

Public Debt as a Factor of Economic Growth

P. Sadykhov

Keywords: public debt, gross domestic product, government budget deficit, unequal exchange, household consumption, investment

ECONOMIST P.Sadykhov challenges the orthodox view of public debt as purely harmful, arguing that sovereign borrowing can, under certain conditions, stimulate growth by sustaining investment and consumption.

He begins with a global overview: by late 2024, public debt reached \$100 trillion, or 93% of world GDP. Yet, rather than signaling collapse, this debt has become an essential instrument for maintaining economic activity amid slower growth and shrinking tax bases. Governments borrow not from weakness but from structural necessity.

Drawing comparisons between developed and emerging economies, Sadykhov notes that in both cases rising debt often correlates with GDP expansion. Borrowing injects liquidity, finances social spending, and supports demand – effects that austerity policies typically undermine. Even debt used to refinance earlier obligations reduces budgetary strain, allowing governments to redirect resources productively.

He critiques IMF orthodoxy favoring budget consolidation and warns that balanced budgets are a myth – in practice, even advanced economies run deficits as a sign of functional governance. Public debt, he argues, reflects the state’s role as the “collective guarantor of last resort” for all domestic liabilities.

Sadykhov also explores structural inequalities in the global financial system. Developing nations, constrained by colonial-era trade patterns and “unequal exchange,” are forced to borrow under unfavorable conditions, perpetuating

dependency. Industrialized economies, by contrast, recycle capital surpluses into global lending, reinforcing the hierarchy.

Nevertheless, responsible borrowing – when directed toward infrastructure, innovation, and social welfare – can be a productive force. The key lies not in debt volume but in how borrowed funds are used. As examples, Sadykhov cites U.S. and Asian experiences where debt-driven public investment has spurred growth without destabilization.

The article ends with a pragmatic conclusion: public debt is neither a curse nor a cure but an instrument. Managed wisely, it can serve as a lever of modernization; mishandled, it becomes a trap. The distinction lies in policy competence, not ideology.

On the Path to a New World Order

Yu. Sayamov

Keywords: new world order, multipolar world, global leadership, global transformations

YURY SAYAMOV examines the profound geopolitical transition from the U.S.-led unipolar system of the post–Cold War era to a polycentric, multipolar world defined by new centers of economic and political gravity. He argues that the world is undergoing a systemic reconfiguration comparable to the 17th-century Westphalian settlement or the aftermath of World War II.

Sayamov identifies the erosion of Western hegemony as the core dynamic. The dominance of Euro-Atlantic institutions is being undermined by the economic ascent of the Global South, the expansion of BRICS, and the strategic realignment of regional powers such as China, India, Brazil, and Russia. The decline of ideological globalization and the failures of Western military interventions – from Iraq to Afghanistan – expose the limits of liberal universalism.

At the heart of this shift lies a crisis of legitimacy. Western governance models, once seen as templates, now appear exhausted; their economic systems struggle with inequality, debt, and political polarization. Meanwhile, non-Western civilizations are reasserting their right to define development on their own cultural terms. Sayamov references Russia’s foreign-policy doctrine emphasizing sovereignty, balance, and cultural pluralism as a response to global homogenization.

He warns that the emerging order is not yet stable: competing visions – the American “rules-based order” versus the UN-chartered system grounded in international law – still collide. The future depends on reconciling these models within a new consensus of civilizational diversity, which recognizes equal security and development rights for all states.

Sayamov concludes that multipolarity must not devolve into fragmentation or bloc confrontation. Instead, it should evolve into cooperative polycentrism, institutionalized through forums like BRICS+, the SCO, and the G20. The task of diplomacy, he writes, is to shape this new architecture peacefully – before the turbulence of transition escalates into systemic crisis.

What Is a Multipolar World Order? **Current Theoretical and Applied Aspects**

A. Drobinin
Ye. Piskunov

Keywords: globalization, multipolarity, countries of the Global South and East, World Majority

AUTHORS provide a conceptual foundation for understanding multipolarity as both a geopolitical reality and a strategic doctrine. Rejecting the binary Cold War logic of East vs. West, they describe a world of multiple, interacting centers of power, each rooted in distinct civilizational identities.

The authors trace the idea's intellectual lineage from classical geopolitics and the balance-of-power theories of the 19th century to modern Russian strategic thought. In their interpretation, multipolarity is not a temporary phase but the natural configuration of international relations in the 21st century – an outcome of demographic, economic, and technological shifts that have redistributed global influence.

They emphasize that multipolarity differs from mere “multilateralism.” While multilateralism refers to procedural cooperation within Western-built institutions, multipolarity implies substantive equality among sovereign centers that set their own developmental paths. This model presupposes cultural pluralism, non-interference, and respect for sovereignty – principles increasingly championed by the Global South.

From a practical standpoint, Drobinin and Piskunov identify three main pillars of the multipolar system:

Regional integration platforms (BRICS, SCO, ASEAN, African Union) that serve as new governance nodes.

Alternative financial and technological ecosystems that reduce dependence on Western monopolies.

A value shift toward cultural sovereignty and the right of civilizations to preserve identity.

They argue that Russia's foreign policy now acts as a structural catalyst for multipolarity – linking Eurasia's vast integration projects, promoting dialogue among civilizations, and countering attempts to reimpose unipolar discipline through sanctions or information control.

Concluding on a theoretical note, the authors foresee multipolarity evolving toward “networked polycentrism,” where regional leaders cooperate dynamically rather than confrontationally. The challenge is to codify this new order through international law before it is defined by raw power competition.

The Munich Dialect and Yaroslavna's Lament

I. Kravchenko

Keywords: globalization, multipolarity, countries of the Global South and East, World Majority

THE ESSAY takes a cultural-political approach, contrasting two emotional modes of Europe's self-perception – the “Munich dialect” of appeasement and the “Yaroslavna's lament” of moral complaint drawn from Russian epic poetry.

The “Munich dialect,” referencing the 1938 Munich Agreement, symbolizes the persistent European tendency to prioritize compromise and comfort over principle, even at the cost of strategic vulnerability. Kravchenko argues that this habit resurfaced in the EU's cautious stance toward crises in the Balkans, the Middle East, and Ukraine: moral rhetoric cloaks an unwillingness to bear responsibility or risk.

By contrast, “Yaroslavna's lament” – a reference to the sorrowful heroine of The Tale of Igor's Campaign – embodies a spiritual empathy and moral endurance deeply embedded in Russian culture. This metaphor becomes Kravchenko's lens for examining divergent civilizational temperaments: Western Europe's pragmatic pacifism versus Russia's tragic idealism.

Through literary and philosophical parallels, she suggests that the West's current moral discourse often masks geopolitical fatigue, while Russia's historical consciousness – though burdened with suffering – retains an active moral dimension capable of self-sacrifice. She invokes the writings of Dostoevsky and Berdyaev to illustrate how Russian spirituality interprets pain as meaning-bearing, not merely as loss.

The author does not idealize Russia but calls for a cultural dialogue that overcomes Europe's “post-Christian irony” and Russia's isolation. The essay

implies that genuine peace requires recovering Europe's moral seriousness and Russia's openness to empathy. The "Munich dialect" must yield to a new language of responsibility if the continent is to escape repeating its 20th-century tragedies.

From European to Eurasian Security

O. Karpovich

A. Grishanov

Keywords: CSCE anniversary, OSCE, Final Act, NATO expansion, dialogue with countries

AUTHORS analyze the shifting security architecture from a Euro-Atlantic to a Eurasian framework. They argue that NATO's eastward expansion and the EU's geopolitical activism have exhausted the old model of "European security," necessitating a broader concept that reflects the realities of the 21st century.

The authors trace how the post-Cold War order, once based on promises of indivisible security, devolved into strategic imbalance. Western institutions monopolized agenda-setting while excluding Russia and much of Eurasia from equal participation. This imbalance, they contend, fueled mistrust and militarization, culminating in today's global fragmentation.

Eurasian security, by contrast, emphasizes inclusive regionalism. Rooted in the principles of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS, it treats security not as deterrence but as developmental interdependence – a model combining political dialogue, energy cooperation, and connectivity projects.

Karpovich and Grishanov highlight the growing role of China, India, and Iran in shaping Eurasia's strategic landscape. They propose that Russia's task is to serve as a bridge civilization, linking European technologies with Asian dynamism under a framework of equal security. The reorientation from Euro-Atlantic defense paradigms toward Eurasian partnership represents, in their view, not isolation but modernization of Russia's global role.

Concluding, the authors call for a new "Helsinki Process" – a dialogue encompassing the entire Eurasian continent, including the Middle East and South Asia, with the goal of replacing bloc rivalry by cooperative security. The future, they

suggest, belongs not to military alliances but to flexible, multipurpose partnerships that balance sovereignty with mutual trust.

Military-Strategic Aspects of Transport Network Development in the European Union

V. Kozyulin

Keywords: dual-use infrastructure, transport infrastructure, military logistics, Military Mobility, “military Schengen,” Rapid Response Forces, Eastern Partnership, solidarity lanes

THE AUTHOR explores how the European Union’s transport infrastructure has evolved from an economic project into a component of NATO’s military strategy. Using technical, political, and security analysis, he argues that the modernization of European transport corridors – railways, highways, and logistics hubs – is increasingly shaped by military mobility requirements.

The EU’s Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), once designed to promote economic integration, now serves dual-use objectives. Since 2017, Brussels and NATO have coordinated to ensure that civilian routes can support the rapid deployment of heavy military equipment across the continent. This integration was justified by the “Russian threat” narrative, but Kozyulin sees it as part of a broader militarization of EU policy.

He notes that infrastructure investments—particularly in Eastern Europe, the Baltics, and the Balkans—now prioritize “military readiness” over commercial utility. Projects once funded under civilian cohesion policies are being repurposed for defense logistics. Rail gauge standardization, bridge reinforcement, and road upgrades are undertaken with an eye toward transporting tanks, not trade goods.

The study further explores the legal and financial frameworks behind this shift: the European Defence Fund, PESCO programs, and NATO’s Military Mobility Initiative. The blurred line between civil and defense spending, Kozyulin warns, risks eroding the EU’s declared commitment to peace and economic stability.

Strategically, he argues that the militarization of transport turns Central and Eastern Europe into forward-operating corridors rather than zones of cooperation. This creates vulnerabilities by making the region both a logistical asset and a potential battleground. Kozyulin calls for restoring balance—ensuring that infrastructure development promotes economic resilience rather than preparing for hypothetical wars.

He concludes that the EU's transport agenda has quietly become a geopolitical instrument. Without transparent dialogue with Russia and its Eurasian neighbors, Europe's connectivity could turn from a bridge of prosperity into a highway of confrontation.

The Baltics: Fail-Safe?

N. Mezhevich

Keywords: Russia and the Baltic states, Northern Dimension, NATO forces, EU, gray zone

THE AUTHOR presents a critical reassessment of the Baltic States' security and economic trajectories three decades after independence. The question mark in the title "Fail-Safe?" – underscores his central thesis: despite heavy Western support, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania remain structurally fragile and strategically dependent.

The Baltics' integration into NATO and the EU was less a success story than a managed geopolitical experiment. These countries, he says, sacrificed economic autonomy for ideological conformity. Their post-Soviet industries collapsed under rapid liberalization, replaced by low-margin service sectors and dependence on EU subsidies. The region's population has shrunk dramatically due to emigration and demographic decline.

Militarily the Baltics serve as outposts rather than participants in Western defense. Their territory hosts rotating NATO contingents and U.S. missile infrastructure, making them "tripwires" in the event of confrontation but offering no real security guarantees. Infrastructure modernization – under the guise of "resilience" – further embeds them in the Euro-Atlantic logistics network described in Kozyulin's preceding article.

The author also examines the informational and cultural dimension of this dependency. Anti-Russian narratives have become a unifying ideology compensating for weak social cohesion and economic malaise. However, he warns that this politics of fear alienates Russian-speaking minorities and fuels regional polarization.

Economically, the Baltic model faces diminishing returns. With EU structural funding set to decline and energy prices rising after the cutoff of Russian supplies, the region's competitiveness crisis is deepening. Attempts to reorient trade toward Scandinavia and Western Europe have yielded modest results, while infrastructure like Rail Baltica remains incomplete and over-budget.

Mezhevich concludes that the "fail-safe" system built by the West around the Baltics may, in fact, be a strategic liability – a zone of vulnerability rather than stability. To achieve genuine resilience, the region must shift from ideological confrontation toward pragmatic regional cooperation, including economic ties with the broader Baltic and Eurasian spaces.

On the 100th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Geneva Protocol

K. Vorontsov

D. Poklonsky

Keywords: Geneva Protocol, prohibition of chemical and biological weapons, customary international law

THE ARTICLE marks the centenary of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which banned the use of chemical and biological weapons, reflecting on its legacy and relevance in the contemporary arms-control landscape.

The authors recall that the Protocol emerged from the horrors of World War I, when gas warfare revealed the devastating potential of chemical agents. Although initially limited – focusing only on use, not production or stockpiling.

Authors stress Russia's consistent role as a guardian of arms-control norms. The USSR was among the earliest advocates of comprehensive bans, and modern Russia has completed the destruction of its chemical arsenal under international verification.

Despite the various ambiguities identified, the Protocol remains to this day a solid foundation for a range of multilateral treaties and is a key milestone in eliminating the threat of the use of chemical and biological weapons. The norm it enshrines – the prohibition on the use in war of “asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices” – has been elaborated and expanded upon in other key international treaties, such as the BTWC and the Chemical Weapons Convention. The latter also establishes an extensive legal mechanism for verifying the chemical disarmament process and investigating alleged instances of the use of such weapons. Thus, the Protocol remains firmly embedded in the fabric of international legal norms and continues to be applied alongside them.

On the Proposition That the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki Led to Japan's Surrender and Saved Hundreds of Thousands of Lives

A. Oganessian

Keywords: bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Potsdam Declaration

ARMEN OGANESYAN opens the Hiroshima–Nagasaki roundtable with a critical essay dismantling the long-standing Western justification for the atomic bombings – that they were necessary to end World War II and save lives.

Drawing on declassified diplomatic correspondence and Japanese archival sources, Oganessian argues that Japan's surrender was not primarily a result of the bombings, but rather of the Soviet Union's entry into the war on August 8, 1945. The rapid defeat of the Kwantung Army and the loss of potential mediation channels through Moscow convinced Tokyo that resistance was futile.

Truman's primary strategic objective was to force Japan into unconditional surrender before the USSR could enter the war. Those researchers – including Japanese scholars – who argue that Truman issued the Potsdam Declaration not as a warning to Japan, but to justify the use of the atomic bomb, are right.

In 1946, the US government published the United States Strategic Bombing Survey, which concluded that the atomic bombs had not been necessary to win the war. After reviewing numerous documents and conducting interviews with hundreds of Japanese military and civilian officials, the report stated the following: “Based on a detailed investigation of all the facts, and supported by the testimony of the surviving Japanese leaders involved, it is the Survey's opinion that certainly prior to 31 December 1945, and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945, Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bombs had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated.”

Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the Context of Countering the Falsification of the History of World War II: From Past to Present

A. Ilyshev-Vvedensky

Keywords: Russia, Japan, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, atomic bombs, falsification of history

AUTHOR situates the atomic bombings within the struggle over historical memory, arguing that the West's retelling of World War II seeks to marginalize the Soviet contribution while morally elevating U.S. actions.

He notes that modern Western textbooks often depict Hiroshima and Nagasaki as tragic but decisive acts that “brought peace.” This, he contends, falsifies history by ignoring the Soviet factor and by normalizing the use of nuclear weapons under the guise of humanitarian necessity.

The author traces how Cold War propaganda transformed the bombings into a civilizational parable: democracy triumphing over militarism through superior technology. This narrative, he warns, continues today in political discourse that portrays U.S. nuclear strategy as “defensive” and Russian deterrence as “aggressive.”

The author calls for a revival of documentary diplomacy – systematic work with archives, declassified materials, and survivor testimony – to restore a balanced historical record. He sees Russia's role as that of a guardian of historical truth, ensuring that the lessons of Hiroshima are not instrumentalized to justify new wars or coercive policies.

In general, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to communicate objective information about significant past events to both Russian and international audiences in order to counter attempts at falsification by the authorities and establishments of foreign states.

The Bombing of Hiroshima in U.S. Feature Films: The Hollywoodization of Catastrophe

A. Kuznetsov

Keywords: films about the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Hollywood, nuclear weapons

THE AUTHOR turns to the cinematic memory of Hiroshima, analyzing how U.S. feature films have transformed one of humanity's darkest events into consumable spectacle. His central claim: Hollywood's treatment of the atomic bombings functions as a form of ideological control – replacing guilt with narrative catharsis.

From early postwar productions like *The Beginning or the End* (1947) to modern blockbuster *Oppenheimer* (2023) referencing nuclear themes, author traces a pattern of moral displacement. American characters are portrayed as reluctant heroes, while Japanese suffering is aestheticized or abstracted. Even when films adopt anti-war tones, they often reaffirm U.S. exceptionalism by framing the bomb as a tragic but fated necessity.

Author shows how Cold War censorship and collaboration between studios and government agencies shaped these portrayals. The Pentagon's script approvals ensured that films avoided questioning presidential responsibility. Later decades introduced the “romanticization” of nuclear history — the bomb as symbol of technological awe or existential reflection rather than as war crime.

American films dedicated to the atomic bombings of Japan present the narrative that US security faced a real threat without them. Thus, even films that depict horrific events are perceived by viewers with sympathy for those who committed mass murder. The list of films presented makes it possible to identify the propaganda clichés used by Hollywood to justify the development and use of nuclear weapons

Facets of the Instrumentalization of Historical Memory of the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

A. Ponamaryova

Keywords: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, nuclear weapons, atomic bombings, instrumentalization of memory

THE AUTHOR cautions that such instrumentalization risks erasing victims' voices and dulling the moral lesson of the tragedy. She advocates a "de-weaponization of memory": using commemoration not for geopolitical messaging but for building a global anti-nuclear ethic.

Summing up the consideration of the facets of instrumentalization of the memory of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki tragedy, carried out by both American and Japanese authorities, we may highlight the following.

The events of recent decades – the invasion of Iraq by the US and its allies, the strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities – vividly confirm the judgment of the late historian Howard Zinn, who observed the confidence of the US military establishment that "if Americans can be induced to accept [the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki], then they can accept any war, any means, so long as the warmakers can supply a reason."

With regard to Japan, the deliberate suppression of the true culprits of the tragedy serves the policy of remilitarization and the erosion of its nonnuclear status within the strengthening of military cooperation with the US. Representatives of Japan's ruling elite either completely exclude from the trauma narrative of Hiroshima and Nagasaki the issue of assigning responsibility, or shift this responsibility for a concrete act committed by the US onto states in the opposing geopolitical "camp," allegedly capable of and prepared to undertake similar actions in the future.

The impoverishment of memory and deliberate forgetting in nuclear policy affect our ability to build ethical relations. And on this track, officials in both Washington and Tokyo make an unambiguous choice in favor of the ethics of utilitarianism.

The Creation of the Atomic Bomb: **The Perspective of American Researchers**

A. Shagov

Keywords: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, atomic bombings, research on A-bomb history

THE AUTHOR surveys the evolution of American historiography on the Manhattan Project, revealing how interpretations of the bomb's creation mirror changing U.S. self-perceptions.

He divides scholarship into three phases:

From 1945 to 1971 – In early 1944, American physicist Henry Smyth raised the issue of preparing a nonclassified report for the general public in the US about the achievements of the Manhattan Project. This idea was supported by the leadership. The report was intended to serve two functions. First, to demonstrate the US's military superiority over the rest of the world by publishing the unclassified portion of the official report on the development of the atomic bomb. Second, to serve as a guide for other scientists regarding what information had been declassified in the US concerning the American atomic bomb. Thus, everything stated in the Smyth Report could be freely discussed in open literature on fundamental nuclear physics and its military application.

From 1971 to 1991 – During this period, debates in academic journals and books in the US reached exceptional intensity over who was responsible for the Cold War and the emergence of atomic diplomacy.

From 1991 to 2000 – During this period several publications were made on the basis of declassified documents, revisiting reasons for Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings as well as revealing the dark side of The US nuclear program – harmful experiments conducted from 1942 to 1942 on American citizens.

Analyzing the works of American politicians and scholars written about the atomic bomb, one can conclude that the archival documents used by the authors clearly show that the decision-makers during the Cold War were more concerned with profound geopolitical issues than with the strategic dynamics between the two nuclear superpowers – the US and the USSR.

Professor P.I. Paskhalny concludes that at the height of the Cold War, when nearly all materials related to the history of the creation, testing, and use of the American atomic bomb were classified, a sufficient number of reliable studies were nonetheless written based on materials and documents from the Manhattan Project, as well as other sources. Most American authors, including direct participants in the project, given the climate of rampant anti-Sovietism and anticommunism, sought to establish the correctness of President Roosevelt's decision to develop the new deadly weapon, and subsequently the order given by his successor, Truman, to drop atomic bombs on Japanese cities. However, there were also those who wrote works that opposed such decisions – but they were in the minority.

**Soviet Diplomats on the Consequences of the
Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
(Based on Materials From the AVPRF)**

M. Yakushev

Keywords: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, nuclear bombings, fiery hell, catastrophic human losses

THE ATOMIC BOMBINGS of the peaceful cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by American aircraft were the first instances in human history of the use of atomic weapons. Shortly after the bombings, the Soviet Union took steps to obtain information about the US's use of nuclear weapons and the consequences of the atomic explosions.

A cipher telegram was sent from Moscow to Tokyo stating the urgent need to dispatch Soviet officers from the USSR's diplomatic mission in the Japanese capital to the epicenters of the explosions in order to gather data to determine the yield of the nuclear warheads. In 1945 and 1946 several groups composed of soviet diplomats and journalists visited bombed cities.

Of particular interest are the reports from trips made by Soviet diplomats, military intelligence officers, and correspondents to the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in September 1945, one month after the atomic bombs were dropped on them on August 6 and 9, respectively.

The bombing of Hiroshima resulted in catastrophic human losses, the overwhelming majority of whom were civilians: 80,000 people were killed instantly; 70,000 suffered severe burns, high doses of radiation, and injuries; and 12,000 went missing. By 1950, due to radiation exposure and cancer, the death toll had reached 200,000 people (out of a city population of 350,000).

The bombing of Nagasaki destroyed 20,000 of the city's 50,000 buildings and resulted in massive civilian casualties, most of whom were noncombatants: 70,000

people were killed instantly; 60,000 suffered severe burns, high doses of radiation, and injuries; and 13,000 went missing. By 1950, due to radiation exposure and cancer, the death toll had reached 140,000 (out of a city population of 260,000).

The Soviet diplomats, military personnel, intelligence officers, and journalists who visited the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki shortly after the bombings risked their lives, and some even sacrificed their lives in service to the Motherland. Their notes, artifacts, and photographs from the sites of the tragic events were used to spur the development of the Soviet nuclear weapons program and the successful testing of the USSR's atomic bomb in 1949.

The Materialization of Sovereignty

A. Konkov

Keywords: May Decrees of the president of Russia, strategic priorities, national development goals, national projects, sovereignty

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin's speeches at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) always become key events on the global agenda that are analyzed for a long time afterward by politicians, businesspeople, experts, and journalists around the world. However, the 2024 address held special significance in that it effectively was the president's first direct message to a broad international audience following the start of his new term in office.

In his keynote address at SPIEF, Vladimir Putin elaborated on Russia's strategic priorities for the coming years, revealed the core meaning of the national development goals, and emphasized the importance of newly launched national projects.

First, the outlined priorities systematically incorporate elements of the international dimension of the state's respective areas of activity – whether through Russia's comparative position vis-à-vis other countries, or its openness to the outside world as a foundational premise of the decree's preamble. Second, the substantive refrain of the concept of sovereignty, combined with recurring references throughout the text to traditional Russian values and related themes, prefigures increasingly evident ideological guidelines for the upcoming “six-year plan.” This marks a fundamental departure from the administrative-technocratic logic of previous May Decree cycles and more clearly delineates the external contours of the new development policy.

Both political and bureaucratic, as well as domestic and foreign elements of state policy, now acquire a universal point of convergence, rooted in the postelection

tradition (emerging from the outcomes of presidential elections) of updating the national strategy.

The established system of Russian strategic planning, defined by the May Decrees and presidential messages and underpinned by the NSS, is based on the unequivocal prioritization of the domestic development agenda. At the same time, as can be seen from a range of target indicators and objectives set out in the newly adopted May Decree, external conditions constitute an integral source both for the formulation of strategic guidelines and for the development of mechanisms to achieve them.

All that Russia has charted out as a path forward in a world that has proven resistant to isolation is in itself a bid for a new model of development – both domestically and internationally. The emerging world order is already taking shape at the intersection of competing visions held by global players. Those who succeed not only in articulating their strategies but also in demonstrating, first, their attainability, and second, their effectiveness, will very likely find themselves among the most promising beneficiaries.

**Russia in Anglo-Saxon Online Media:
Frequency of Mentions and Tonal Analysis**

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D. Onegov**

Keywords: Russia, Anglo-Saxon countries, UK, US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, global information space, publication tone

RUSSIA'S REEMERGENCE as a great power presents new challenges to the Russian research community studying information processes in the international arena. Among these challenges is the need to monitor global trends. The aim of this article is to demonstrate, using large datasets, how the overall tone of publications mentioning Russia in one way or another changed across the Internet as a whole from 2022 to 2024, and specifically within the English-language segment from January 2024 through March 2025.

The study analyzes news, information, and analytical texts, as well as press releases, legal documents, statistical publications, corporate and industry reports, and similar content. Photo, video, and audio materials, advertising messages, academic publications, fiction, and entertainment materials were not analyzed.

The article examines two time periods with different analytical frameworks. The first period covers 2022 through 2024, in one-year increments, and involves statistical analysis of materials published on more than 20,000 global platforms from over 100 countries in 30 languages.

The second period spans the entirety of 2024 and the first quarter of 2025, with a quarterly breakdown (five quarters total). This part focuses solely on English-language materials drawn from approximately 9,500 sources in countries such as the US, the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

In recent years, Russia has ranked among the top three most frequently mentioned countries in the informational sector of the Internet. Russia's SMO in Ukraine, launched in 2022, triggered a major media storm – a sharp increase in global content mentioning Russia – which pushed the country to first place worldwide. This underscores Russia's high significance in the global online information space.

The overall tonal background of the global information space remained predominantly neutral – between 2022 and 2024.

Positively toned materials focused on Russia's economy, science, education, and culture. Certain Anglo-Saxon outlets that published content mentioning Russia were found to have a positive tonal balance.

Coverage of events in Russia in Anglo-Saxon sources has a noticeable negative bias. However, this negative tone is not associated with all topics; rather, it primarily concerns legal, political, and military issues. At the same time, Russia is mentioned in a positive tone in a number of publications – particularly those related to the economy, as well as science, education, and culture.

From January 2024 through March 2025, there has been a decline in the number of negatively toned publications mentioning Russia in Anglo-Saxon online sources.

A New Start for the Franco-German Tandem

Yu. Rubinsky

A. Sindeyev

Keywords: Emmanuel Macron, Friedrich Merz, sovereign policy, EU defense capability, Ukraine as Russia-EU buffer, “joint project”

ON MAY 7, 2025, the newly appointed German Chancellor Friedrich Merz (CDU) made his first official foreign visit to Paris, during which France and Germany agreed to renew their bilateral relations. The authors analyze the essence and prospects of this renewal in light of the tandem’s current tasks and capabilities.

President Emmanuel Macron believes the tandem must “open a new chapter” and create a “Franco-German reflex” – that is, ensure stable cooperation under any circumstances and with any leadership.

Freidrich Merz understands that Germany is expected to assume “leadership responsibility within the European Union and beyond” and to engage in “equal cooperation with international partners.”⁴ However, he does not clarify what exactly this future leadership responsibility or equal cooperation will entail

Based on the above, the concept of a joint project remains rather fluid, and the notion of a “new chapter” in bilateral relations appears to be little more than rhetorical flourish.

If France and Germany seek to achieve tangible results – rather than opening yet another “new chapter” in bilateral relations at some later date – their objective national interests will require them to concentrate fully on the smallest feasible joint project, strengthen their nation-states, and define the balance between national and supranational elements within the EU.

The development of the tandem and the EU will depend on the outcome of this joint project.

Involvement in the Ukraine crisis and the struggle to weaken Russia are overstretching both France and Germany, hindering the successful implementation of their respective agendas, and weakening the EU itself.

National interests call for a fundamentally different policy – one focused on internal cohesion and consolidation. Dispersing forces is ill advised. The “Ukraine consensus” will not make ad hoc unity a replacement for the cohesion needed by both partners and the EU

Participation of Migrants in Cultural Life as a Mechanism of Integration: The Experience of Germany

A. Nadezhdin

Keywords: migration processes, integration, regional policy, cultural sphere, literature, creative activity, socio-cultural projects, decolonization

UNDER CURRENT conditions, the integration and social adaptation of labor migrants, individuals from families with a migration background, or refugees from crisis regions represent a significant challenge for host societies. Difficulties in this area lead to social segregation and disintegration, and jeopardize interethnic and interfaith harmony, while also provoking discriminatory practices and extremist or xenophobic tendencies.

In this context, it is important to create conditions that encourage migrants to engage with the culture of the host country. Culture is a tool with a considerable communicative function; it stimulates the socialization of individuals with different identities, expands opportunities to overcome stereotypical thinking, and helps build a society of equal opportunities. Participation in creative activity and cultural life, the promotion of one's own creative output, enables individuals – regardless of origin or faith – to find various pathways to engage with society and identify themselves as members of that society.

Thus, amid demographic changes, an increase in the population of people with migrant backgrounds, high levels of labor migration, and an influx of refugees from crisis regions, there is a growing need to strengthen mechanisms for integrating these social groups into the host society. Expanding opportunities for their participation in cultural life is a highly promising mechanism that facilitates social inclusion, reduces the distance from the native population, and promotes self-realization. Experts note that integration through culture and creativity fosters individual development, a sense of belonging, the formation of shared values and legal norms, and broader

social cohesion. This process unfolds along two main lines: the convergence of different cultures and the direct involvement of migrants in creative activities.

At this stage, a key limiting factor is the underrepresentation of people with migrant backgrounds in state-initiated integration programs, including in culture and the arts. This can be attributed both to underdeveloped tools for implementing such programs and to these citizens' low interest in participation in them, given that they have lived for so long as part of closed ethnic communities. Nonetheless, based on our analysis, the demand for cultural initiatives as a tool for integration is expected to grow steadily in the medium term.

Given Germany's federal political system, the main burden of implementing integration measures lies at the regional and municipal levels. States such as Berlin, Hesse, and North Rhine-Westphalia are particularly active in promoting cultural inclusion, as they have large populations with migrant backgrounds and significant experience working with these communities.

Regional governments are pursuing a comprehensive approach that includes refining legal frameworks, developing new adaptive programs, expanding cooperation, and increasing funding for relevant civic organizations. As the study shows, migrants have the greatest opportunities to present themselves and showcase their creative output in literature, film, and theater. These artistic fields reflect the diversity of world cultures, respond quickly to socio-demographic transformations, and are among the most open to new authors and creative visions.

Germany's Approach to Relations With Russia: Stuck in the Mire, Ready to Hit Rock Bottom

F. Trunov

Keywords: Germany, foreign policy, militarization, containment, Bundeswehr, Lithuania, Ukraine, threshold for use of force, neo-Nazism

THIS ARTICLE seeks to examine Berlin's current approaches to dialogue with Russia and particular aspects of its unfriendly political and military actions. Russian experts have been seeking to trace the deterioration of this dialogue since the mid-2010s, noting growing concern over Germany's retreat from acknowledging its historical responsibility toward Russia.⁶ At the same time, for natural reasons, the current dimensions of these trends have not yet been studied in sufficient detail.

Should Berlin decide to transfer Taurus missiles, it would mark a critical lowering of the FRG's threshold for the use of force – until now significantly higher than that of other Western powers. Such a decision would push Germany past the point of no return in its abdication of historical responsibility for the atrocities of the Third Reich – particularly toward the main victim of Nazi aggression, Russia, the successor state to the Soviet Union. This decision could not fail to provoke a firm and unavoidable response from the Russian Federation.

Germany's leading contribution among European "liberal democracies" to Ukraine's military support – and more importantly, to a wide array of NATO formations, including rapid response forces – is a manifestation of its leadership ambitions. Since at least June 2022, Germany has declared its intention to create the largest conventional armed forces among European NATO members. On the path of militarization, the FRG aims, together with other Western countries, to win the current confrontation with Russia, drawing on the experience of how the Cold War ended. However, Russia does not exhibit the signs of fragility that characterized the USSR under Gorbachev. Modern Russian foreign policy is clearly guided by

objective national interests and demonstrates a relatively rational approach to resource expenditure. Thus, the arms race that Germany is actively joining may render Germany itself fragile.

It appears that the planned and ongoing changes to Germany's military machine, marked by their overtly anti-Russian tone, will also lead to unsatisfactory outcomes. In contrast, the only military reform conducted not in opposition to Russia but in close cooperation with it, produced tremendous positive results. Prussia succeeded in throwing off the yoke of French occupation, reestablishing itself as a sovereign European power, and regaining its territorial integrity – laying the groundwork for its future role as a unifier of German lands.

Moldova's European Path: Advantages and Risks of EU Accession

O. Karapotkin

Keywords: European Union, European integration, Eastern Partnership, Euroscepticism

THE AUTUMN of 2024 proved decisive for the future political course of the Republic of Moldova. Following the results of a nationwide referendum and a second round of the presidential election, Moldova maintained its focus on obtaining European Union membership.

A narrow margin of approximately 0.7% in favor of amending Moldova's Constitution to include provisions on European integration highlighted the political polarization of the Moldovan population. It is worth noting that the referendum was supported by a majority only in nine central districts of the country. In the remaining districts, more than half or an overwhelming majority of citizens voted "No."¹ The outcome of the constitutional vote and the presidential election was significantly influenced by the Moldovan diaspora living in Western countries, whereas the large diaspora residing in Russia had extremely limited opportunities to fulfill their civic duty.

EU membership is full of contradictions. On the one hand, as envisioned by the founding countries, member states of the integration bloc receive significant economic benefits. The EU declares principles of democratic governance, the rule of law, and human rights, which are meant to promote a stable political environment, cooperation, and dialogue. On the other hand, participation in integration processes imposes obligations on member states to comply with the rules and laws established by supranational bodies, which limits sovereignty – for example, in areas such as migration, trade, and economic policy. Membership in the EU also entails the payment of financial contributions, which can become a burden on the economy and

budget. Opening the domestic market to other members of the integration bloc with stronger economies may also negatively impact local producers.

Moldova's membership in the EU does not meet the expectations of the current authorities. Approximately half of the country's population sees no advantages in European integration capable of improving the domestic situation. The prospect of receiving funds for agricultural development appears questionable, given the EU's environmental agenda. Moldovan producers will have to invest considerable effort and time to meet European standards in order to access EU markets.

Accession to the EU will not resolve the country's energy crisis, either. Electricity and gas are quite expensive in EU countries, while the development of alternative energy sources requires enormous investment. Given the uncertainty surrounding improvements to the socio-economic situation, EU membership may trigger an even greater population exodus from Moldova. Accession also implies a loss of control over migration policy.

The pursuit of a utopian vision of a better life within the EU may plunge Moldova's economy into deeper crisis. In the worst-case scenario, the country risks becoming a source of labor migration for the EU's developed states. Fertile land and other natural resources will most likely be purchased by foreign investors. Moreover, there is serious concern over the Moldovan government's ability to service the loans it has taken from European financial institutions. All this is compounded by economic stagnation. In our view, Moldova must pursue a balanced and multi-vector foreign policy – free of externally imposed agendas and aligned with the national interests of the country and its people. This means focusing on strengthening its sovereignty, especially in the economic and energy spheres.

Afghan-Pakistani Relations at the Present Stage

O. Nessar

Keywords: Afghanistan, Taliban, Pakistan, TTP, India

THE FOREIGN POLICY of the Taliban government since 2021 has generally developed in line with expected regional trends; however, relations with Pakistan have been a notable exception, demonstrating an unexpected dynamic. Historically the Taliban's main patron, Pakistan has faced growing tensions in bilateral relations since the group's return to power. The significant decline in Islamabad's influence over the Taliban has stripped Pakistan of its status as a key mediator in the Afghan settlement process. This transformation has already impacted the approaches of regional powers. Russia, China, and India are gradually shifting toward direct engagement with Kabul, minimizing Pakistani mediation. The current situation is of particular importance for the entire system of regional security and economic cooperation. The cooling of relations between Kabul and Islamabad not only destabilizes the border areas but also reconfigures traditional interaction patterns in Central and South Asia. At the same time, it creates new challenges for infrastructure projects and trade routes linking Afghanistan with neighboring states. Having lost its traditional support on the part of Pakistan, the Taliban are being forced to seek alternative partners, which is already shifting the balance of power in the region and requires a revision of existing strategies for engaging with the new Afghan authorities

Overall, an analysis of interaction between the Taliban government and Pakistan from 2021 to 2025 shows a gradual decline in the intensity of contacts, which is linked to growing disagreements and deteriorating relations between the two sides. This trend is not unique: The Taliban are essentially following the behavioral pattern of other Afghan military-political movements that had benefited

from Pakistan's support in the past but began to distance themselves from Islamabad after coming to power in Kabul. This pattern of behavior by Afghan political forces is driven by a number of factors, including historical ones. Anti-Pakistan sentiments among the Afghan population and elites compel new governments to demonstrate independence – even if they were previously dependent on Islamabad's support.

Thus, despite their initial dependence on Pakistan, the Taliban, like their predecessors, are gradually reducing the level of engagement. Despite a relatively high level of political communication, relations between Pakistan and the Taliban remain complicated and are gradually becoming confrontational. Although there is considerable potential for cooperation in various areas, including infrastructure projects, Pakistan's current primary concern is the threat posed by radical groups such as the TTP, which – despite ideological proximity to the Afghan Taliban – represents a source of risk for Islamabad.

The prospects for Afghan-Pakistani relations remain uncertain and depend on a complex interplay of factors. Of key importance is the Taliban government's ability to exercise effective control over radical elements, including the TTP, which is banned in Pakistan. The domestic political situation in Pakistan – marked by the gradual erosion of state institutions, growing socio-economic and interethnic instability – has a significant impact on the direction of bilateral relations. A particularly important role in shaping the Taliban's foreign policy is the further evolution of the India-Pakistan conflict, particularly any potential escalation in Kashmir, the strengthening of the religious-ideological dimension of the confrontation, and changes in the regional balance of power.

The ‘Century of Turkey’ Concept as a Guide for Ankara’s Foreign Policy

M. Kolesnikova,

M. Urper

Keywords: Turkey, Erdoğan, foreign policy, foreign policy doctrine, ‘Century of Turkey,’ neo-imperialism, Middle East

IN THE 21ST CENTURY, Turkey seeks to claim increasingly prominent positions in international affairs, engaging in developments even in the most remote regions of the world. Ankara’s African vector of foreign policy is gaining momentum; the Asia Anew Initiative launched in 2019 is expanding with new projects; and ties are growing with Latin American countries – not to mention with its traditional partners in the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Turkic-speaking states of Eurasia. The Antalya Diplomacy Forum, which has become a regular event, is promoted by Turkish politicians as an innovative platform for exchanging views on global and regional issues and for seeking solutions to key foreign policy challenges, aiming to establish itself as a “venue for new diplomacy.” The space for peacekeeping initiatives is expanding, while the military component of its international activity is growing.

Due to its enduring Euro-Atlantic solidarity and certain restraining commitments within NATO, it is difficult to speak of Turkey’s foreign policy as fully independent at this stage. At the same time, the Republic of Turkey today appears to be one of the few actors in global politics pursuing an independent foreign policy orientation, taking into account ever-changing realities and specific national interests. In its effort to follow a sovereign path in international affairs, Ankara is critically reconsidering the theoretical foundations of the modern world order to develop an understanding of its own place in the emerging global picture.

The “Century of Turkey” program, proposed by the Turkish president ahead of the republic’s centennial, remains less studied. It envisions the construction of a

Turkish axis encompassing the broadest range of issues – from security policy and trade diversification to climate change and women’s rights. Although the program’s tenets have not yet been spelled out in a single document, they are reflected in the Turkish Foreign Ministry’s strategic plan for 2024-2028, as well as in speeches by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and several ministers.

The “Century of Turkey” concept put forward by the Turkish president signals the intent of the AK Party government and Erdoğan intent to launch new programs and projects that will shape the coming century in which Turkey, according to the program’s architects, is assigned the role of an undisputed regional leader and influential global actor. At the same time, it is also a kind of appeal to world powers to cease interfering in the country’s internal affairs – albeit couched in rather rhetorical and populist terms. By demonstrating its readiness to counter domestic and foreign threats using its own resources and capabilities, Turkey seeks to assert its growing power and influence in an era of global politics and instability, and to contribute its own perspective to the ideological debates over a transforming world order.

However, the goals declared by the Turkish side do not always have a solid foundation for practical implementation. Economic and social problems, as well as ongoing domestic political instability, significantly slow the pace of progress toward the declared targets. Nonetheless, the substantial policy groundwork, supported by the loyalty of the current ruling team to its leader and the intensity of Ankara’s foreign policy efforts, makes it possible to assert that in the medium term – provided the pro-Erdoğan elite remains in power – the course toward building the “Century of Turkey” will evidently continue, even if in 2028, following the presidential election, Erdoğan is replaced by another candidate.

Russian-Turkish Law-Enforcement Cooperation at the Present Stage

T. Kashirina

Keywords: international relations, Russian-Turkish relations, legal framework, law enforcement, terrorism, crime, extradition, transit of criminals

THE FOUNDATIONAL LEGAL ACT of Russian-Turkish relations at the present stage is the Treaty on the Principles of Relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey, signed on May 25, 1992.¹ Building on the traditions of historically established neighborly friendship, the states mutually recognized each other as friendly countries. The principles of good-neighborliness, partnership, and trust, as well as respect for political independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, noninterference in internal affairs, equality, and mutual benefit, were proclaimed as the basis for cooperation. An important provision was the commitment by both parties not to commit acts of aggression against each other and not to support third-party aggressor states in the event of an attack on Russia or Turkey.

On December 1, 2014, Russia and Turkey signed the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and Extradition. This treaty encompasses a broad range of partnership areas and shared interests, including issues of law enforcement. The treaty established the obligation to provide mutual “legal assistance in connection with investigations, criminal prosecutions, and other procedural actions in criminal cases”.

The intensification of Russian-Turkish law-enforcement cooperation, particularly in the process of extraditing criminals, has occurred in the wake of the 2015 crisis involving the downing of a Russian aircraft by Turkish air defense forces, as well as Russia’s support of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan during the attempted coup in 2016, and especially since the start of Russia’s Special Military Operation.

Law-enforcement cooperation between Russia and Turkey has increased since the resolution of the 2015 crisis in bilateral relations and especially following the launch of Russia's SMO, against the backdrop of numerous refusals by Western countries to provide legal assistance and extradite criminals at the request of Russian law-enforcement agencies.

Cooperation between Russia and Turkey in combating crime and terrorism is developing amid the strengthening of mutual ties in a number of areas – political, military-technical, naval, energy, and peaceful nuclear energy – and to maintain its effectiveness, this area of cooperation must remain depoliticized.

Russian-Chinese Cooperation in Education: A Mutually Beneficial Projection of Soft Power

I. Pozdnyakov

Keywords: education in China, student exchange, CSC, SOU, university cooperation, language promotion

CHINA is not only the world's top source of self-funded international students, but is also becoming one of the largest exporters and providers of educational services, hosting more than 200,000 foreign students (around 500,000 before the COVID-19 pandemic). In the 2022/2023 academic year, 16,169 Russian students were studying in China. In the 2023/2024 academic year, that number increased to 20,955. Alongside the US, India, South Korea, and Japan, Russia is among the leading countries in terms of the number of its students enrolled in Chinese universities.

More than 500 Russian citizens receive annual educational grants (scholarships) from the Government of the PRC, covering tuition, accommodation, and including a monthly stipend ranging from 2,500 to 3,500 yuan.

The largest concentrations of Russian students are found in major cities (Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Guangzhou) and the provinces of Liaoning, Heilongjiang, Shandong, and Zhejiang. In addition to the predominant field of Chinese language studies, Russian students pursue degrees in economics, management, and engineering, and to a lesser extent in law, the arts, traditional Chinese medicine, philosophy, history, and agriculture. The Association of Russian Students in China has over 2,000 members.

This type of cooperation is a two-way street, and Russia is no less attractive to Chinese students. After a sharp drop during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 – when our consular offices in the PRC issued only about 4,500 student visas, down from 17,000 in 2019 – the results of Russian universities' efforts to boost

education exports became apparent: By 2022, visa applications rebounded to 17,000, and in 2023-2024 reached 34,000 annually.

The annual growth rate of Russian language learners in China has reached 7%. Russian language and philology are taught as majors in 182 Russian language institutes (previously 169) within linguistic and multidisciplinary universities, enrolling 35,000 Russian language students.

Founded in 1981, the Chinese Association of Russian Language and Literature Teachers (CARLLT) is Russia's key partner in promoting the Russian language in the country.

Russia highly values the contribution of its partners – Chinese scholars and educators who truly love their work – to the promotion of the Russian language.

China's desire to become a global educational power, along with the plans – voiced by the two countries' leaders during Xi Jinping's May visit to Moscow – to hold Cross Years of Education in 2026-2027, will fuel bilateral interuniversity cooperation, including in multilateral formats such as the SCO and BRICS network universities. It appears that Russian universities, along these tracks, should act primarily based on the objectives of their international advancement. In this regard, new challenges and interesting practical objectives are emerging in educational diplomacy with China.

Promising Areas for Exporting Russian Education Within BRICS

O. Karpovich

Keywords: Russia, BRICS, education, export, cooperation, prospects, projects, universities

RUSSIA is currently a leading destination for international students. According to calculations by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, as of February 2024 the country ranked sixth globally in terms of the number of foreign students. Approximately 4 million students are enrolled in Russian universities, 355,000 of whom are from foreign countries. It is also worth noting the growth over six years: In 2018, there were about 290,000 foreign students. Russian education has maintained its standing despite the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical turbulence, demonstrating sustained interest among international students in studying in Russia. The most popular university is the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN), which hosts students from 161 countries. The country from which students most frequently come to Russia for higher education programs is Kazakhstan (60,000).

In particular, Russian education is in demand among the young people of BRICS countries. In the 2023/2024 academic year, more than 39,000 students from China were studying in Russia, about 21,000 from India, approximately 380 from South Africa, and around 220 from Brazil. Additionally, about 23,000 students came from Egypt, Iran, the UAE, and Ethiopia, which joined the five BRICS member states on January 1, 2024.

The export of Russian education to the BRICS market can be mutually beneficial to both Russia and its partners. BRICS member states are united by their pursuit of technological sovereignty and the goal of increasing the proportion of highly qualified personnel in sectors where final products are developed. The

development of new programs and the improvement of existing infrastructure should proceed with the active involvement of Russian businesses and other BRICS stakeholders. Such an approach would enhance the targeted nature of training, create additional financial support mechanisms, and bring education closer to practice and market demands.

The involvement of industrial enterprises in the development of courses for students from Russia and BRICS countries will contribute to better coordination among universities, research centers, and companies, while also creating new opportunities for partnership development. To increase the appeal of Russian education within BRICS, it is necessary to analyze the specific needs of each country for particular specialists and then expand educational programs to reflect the demands and expectations of these target markets. If successful programs are scaled in partner countries, education exports could become a source of extra-budgetary revenue for Russian universities and regions.

The implementation of these measures aligns with the goals outlined in Russia's national projects. Moreover, the recommendations derived from this research could later be applied to other friendly countries beyond BRICS. Through education exports, Russia will establish resilient alumni and knowledge networks outside the bounds of Western pressure and provide momentum for strengthening the intellectual and cultural foundations of an emerging multipolar world order.

Serbia and Russia: A Strong Sense of Mutual Connection

N. Selaković

Keywords: Russia, Serbia, cultural ties, brotherly nations, Orthodox shrines, Russian-Serbian history

RELATIONS between the Republic of Serbia and the Russian Federation are based on shared history and traditions; the linguistic, spiritual, religious, and cultural closeness of our fraternal peoples; as well as on strategic partnership.

Centuries of closeness, alliances in various historical periods (especially in the struggle against the Ottoman Empire and during both World Wars), and Russia's support of Serbian national interests throughout history (for example, in the struggle for liberation and the creation of the Serbian state) create a strong sense of mutual connection. These shared values form an important part of our collective memory and represent a solid foundation for close relations.

The position of the Republic of Serbia on all key issues is based on independence, self-reliance, and sovereign decision-making. We believe that, in the very difficult global circumstances we currently face, culture must contribute to establishing mutual understanding and overcoming the challenges we encounter, such as revisionism and the like. Our side is committed to fostering cultural cooperation, especially given the centuries-long historical ties between our two fraternal peoples.

Cooperation between Serbia and Russia in the field of cinematography has a long-standing tradition and continues to develop, showing mutual interest in deepening cultural ties. This interaction takes place at various levels – from exchanges and festival participation to potential joint film production and involvement in international projects and initiatives.

Russian-Serbian historical ties are deep and multifaceted. They have been marked over the centuries by shared challenges, alliances, and spiritual kinship. Our peoples are united primarily by the Orthodox faith and Slavic roots, which create a strong sense of closeness and mutual support. Throughout history, Russia has often acted as a defender of Serbia, particularly during the period of Ottoman rule and the national liberation struggle.

Cultural exchange, especially in the field of music, is an important area of cooperation between the Republic of Serbia and the Russian Federation. There is deep mutual respect for the musical traditions of both countries, which is reflected in numerous guest performances, joint projects, and educational initiatives.

Kosovo is an existential issue for Serbia. We regard Kosovo and Metohija as inseparable parts of our territory and as the cradle of our identity, spirituality, and statehood.

For Serbia, the protection of our holy places in Kosovo and Metohija – which, unfortunately, remain under threat – is an absolute priority.

The historical memory of Russians who brought honor to Serbia is tenderly preserved. Thanks to their architectural heritage, many buildings bear memorial plaques with their names. There are museums and archives – such as the Russian House in Belgrade – that preserve documents and artifacts that bear witness to their lives and activity. We also organize scholarly conferences and publish works that examine their contributions in detail. Through cultural and educational initiatives, younger generations are introduced to this important component of our shared history.

All of this attests that Serbia is profoundly grateful and cherishes the contributions of the Russian intelligentsia, who, through their work and love, rendered great service to our country and bound our two nations even more tightly.

Italians Are Always Ready to Return to the Russian Market

V. Torrembini

Keywords: Russia, Italy, business, Russian market

OUT OF NEARLY 100 companies that have production facilities in Russia, only three have left. One of them is very large – Enel, which produces electricity. But since it's a state-owned company, it was naturally almost entirely sold off. The other two – small companies – left not for political reasons but due to internal issues. All the others are still operating quite successfully.

Before 2022, Italy's exports to Russia totaled about €10 billion, and today it's around €3.5 billion. And there's more. We exported components to Germany for many enterprises, which were then resold to Russia. And in that area, we lost even more. So the losses for us are very significant.

Our foreign minister, Mr. Antonio Tajani, is one of the few in Europe who says that we are not at war with Russia and that we need to protect Italian companies working in Russia. But the prime minister, on the contrary, supports any actions by the EU that target businesses connected with Russia. So it's very difficult to work in such a split situation.

The 18th sanctions package against Russia is already in the works. Banks, fearful of American sanctions, are being extremely cautious. Our government is acting against businesses operating in Russia. The Italian bank accounts of our colleagues who live and work in Russia are often blocked because their transactions are deemed suspicious.

Naturally, the past three years have been unstable. Italy has been placed on [Russia's] list of unfriendly countries, so a lot of new laws and regulations that have been adopted affect our operations. Even so, we feel understanding, and at times support, from the authorities.

Special, Privileged, Strategic

D. Alipov

Keywords: strategic cooperation, energy cooperation, counterterrorism efforts, Working Group, RIC, neutrality on Ukraine

IN 2000 Russia and India signed the Declaration on Strategic Partnership, and later agreed to elevate it to a “specially privileged” level. This definition of our relationship not only reflected the steady progress achieved, but also set an inspiring example for others. Today, India has already established 40 strategic partnerships with various countries. Many of them have other descriptors such as “comprehensive,” “expanded,” or, for example, “green.”

With the US, as is well known, India has a “[comprehensive] global strategic partnership.” Presumably, each of these designations carries a certain meaning. But in the case of Russia, the meaning, in my view, is the most evident, because since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and India, there has not been a single disagreement or falling out. Yes, there have been certain divergences – there are some even now – on this or that issue, but they relate to noncritical, operational problems.

Over the past three years, deliveries of Russian oil to India have increased tenfold. In this respect, the results of recent years are simply unprecedented, as our two countries have never reached such figures before. And this growth continues – our deliveries are increasing. India is actively buying Russian oil and is interested in continuing to do so. A landmark development is, of course, the contract between Rosneft and the Indian company Reliance Industries for the purchase of 500,000 [metric] tons per day over 10 years. At the same time, when we speak about energy cooperation, we must also take into account the large Indian investments in the Russian fuel and energy sector that were made even before the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2002, the government of the Russian Federation and the government of the Republic of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation in Combating Terrorism. Our dialogue is based on this document. We have a Working Group on Counterterrorism at the level of deputy foreign ministers, which underscores once again the importance of this issue to both sides. The most recent meeting of the Group took place in December 2024 in Moscow. We also maintain counterterrorism dialogue between the security councils of our countries at the level of their secretaries.

As you know, India generally refrains from commenting on the course of the SMO [Special Military Operation]. New Delhi's statements typically consist of calls for an early cessation of hostilities and the launch of political dialogue. It also emphasizes the need to take into account the legitimate interests and concerns of both sides. In doing so, India signals that any long-term settlement must address the root causes of the conflict.

India, as we know, is interested in expanding its own arms exports and is pursuing a policy to that end. However, European calls for India to establish and expand military-technical cooperation are a serious cause for concern, especially considering the EU's openly hostile stance toward Russia.

The Great Victory of 1945:
Our Pride, Our Faith, Our Memory

Metropolitan Theodosius

Keywords: Great Patriotic War, Victory, Russian Orthodox Church, spiritual values, historical memory, patriotic education

ON MAY 9, 2025, for the 80th time, our country and the entire Russian World celebrated the Day of Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941- 1945. The war brought our people immeasurable suffering and destruction, enormous economic losses, left millions homeless, and inflicted “deep and unhealed wounds” in every family.

In the upheavals and misfortunes of wartime, our people remembered their Creator. The difficult years of war became a time of spiritual revival and a return to Orthodox Christian roots. During this period, the state’s repressive policies toward the Russian Church were eased, and the Church, though weakened, once again demonstrated – as it had many times before – its spiritual strength.

The Church reverently preserves the memory of the Great Victory, granted by God, and believes that its true Source is the Creator of heaven and earth.

From olden times, Christian warriors, when evaluating their personal contribution to victory, humbly believed that “victory in war comes not from the multitude of soldiers, but strength comes from heaven”. And we believe that in 1945 the enemy was defeated with the help of God’s power and at the cost of immense spiritual and physical exertion by all the peoples of our Fatherland.

Today, the countries of the so-called collective West are doing all they can to weaken our state. It must be noted that their envy and hatred toward us did not appear recently. They trace back to the origins of Holy Rus and have continued for centuries.

The supporters of globalism are waging war against us in every area of life: moral and spiritual, demographic, social, informational. Today's destroyers of eternal moral values have forgotten the lessons of the Great Patriotic War.

The desire of our adversaries to rewrite Russian history – or to remove its glorious pages from the global historical narrative altogether – is becoming increasingly evident. Their aim is to discredit our outstanding figures and courageous heroes, to make us bow before Western idols and reject our national leaders and spiritual mentors.

In today's world, there is a remorseless promotion of Nazism. This ideology was covertly nurtured in the West during the Cold War and is now openly supported. Our struggle against Nazism is existential – we have no right to lose it, for that would mean the destruction of the Russian World and the great Russian civilization. To prevent this, our soldiers today are heroically fighting in the zone of the Special Military Operation.

The Russian Church today calls on all people to look at world events through a spiritual lens and to understand the true nature of what is happening around us. Awareness of the coming apocalypse will undoubtedly urge us to mobilize all our spiritual and physical strength to defend our Homeland, our Church, our faith, and what we hold sacred; to rise as soon as possible in united prayer in our churches, with firm hope in God.

Sages and Ceremonies:
The Reception of the First Chinese and Japanese Diplomatic Missions in
Russia

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Keywords: diplomatic protocol, Chief Master of Ceremonies, diplomatic missions, Expedition of Ceremonial Affairs

THE history of Russia's protocol service dates to the time of Emperor Peter I. The first Russian emperor was the one who introduced diplomatic protocol standards modeled after the practices of Western countries and established the rank of Chief Master of Ceremonies in the Table of Ranks on February 4, 1722.

For the first time in the history of the Russian Empire, a patent for the rank of Chief Master of Ceremonies of Her Imperial Majesty's Court was issued on April 10, 1726 (March 30, 1726, O.S.) to Count Franz Matveyevich Santi in accordance with an imperial decree by Empress Catherine I. This date can be considered the starting point for the prototype of Russia's protocol service, since it was around this historical figure that the Ceremonial Department of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs later formed.

In the decree of Empress Catherine II dated February 8, 1779, "On the Staffing of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs," the Ceremonial Department was already listed as a separate organizational unit responsible for protocol matters.

In 1856, Prince Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov became minister of foreign affairs. Prince Gorchakov devoted his main efforts to addressing the challenges posed by the Russian Empire's defeat in the Crimean War. At the same time, increased attention was given to building and developing ties with Eastern countries. While in the first half of the 19th century Russia had primarily engaged with countries in the Near East – namely Persia and the Ottoman Empire – the second

half of the century saw a marked shift. Regions of Central Asia, and later the Far East, became areas of particular interest to Russia. The reign of Alexander II saw the first official contacts with Japan and the resumption of relations with China.

Information about the reception of the first diplomatic missions from China and Japan reveals details about the work of the MIC's Expedition of Ceremonial Affairs. In matters concerning meetings with representatives of unfamiliar Eastern cultures, the staff of the expedition worked closely with their colleagues from the Asian Department of the MFA. Summarizing examples of this joint work, it can be said that Russian diplomats knowledgeable about the East were instrumental in planning receptions, hosting and accommodating diplomatic missions, and organizing cultural programs. The staff of the Expedition of Ceremonial Affairs, in consultation with Asian Department specialists in Eastern languages and cultures, conducted their own research aimed at preserving institutional memory and analyzing ceremonial practices. All these efforts went a long way toward strengthening relations between Russia and its Far Eastern neighbors, reinforcing economic and cultural ties, and positively influencing the frequency of official contacts.

A Desk Reference for Future Diplomats

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Keywords: textbook, new interpretation of the international situation, broad agenda, practical value

THE DIPLOMATIC ACADEMY of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russia's oldest institution for training international affairs professionals, has released the textbook *Modern International Relations: An Era of Change*.^{*} Its authors, faculty members of the Department of International Relations, are true professionals in both political science and historical research as well as in diplomatic practice. The editorial team, and the department itself, is led by Konstantin Kosachev, deputy chairman of Russia's Federation Council.

What stands out immediately is the authors' attempt at a comprehensive reinterpretation of the qualitatively new international landscape, with the geopolitical crisis in relations between the West and Russia serving as the central issue. This "era of change" is reflected in the textbook's structure.

Naturally, making sense of the new international situation required the incorporation of new facts and assessments, making this publication more than just an educational and methodological resource and giving it some of the qualities of a scholarly monograph.

Another important feature of the textbook is its effort to fill significant cognitive gaps remaining in Russian educational materials – gaps inherited from the Soviet period and from three decades of liberal ideological dominance.

Despite the thematic diversity and the variety of authorial styles, this monolithic textbook of over 800 pages is rich in factual material and offers a balanced, objective analysis of the international situation and the foreign policy of the Russian state