

Abstracts and Keywords

Anton KRUTIKOV

“THE FREE WILL”: THE GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA AND MOSCOW IN THE LATE 14TH TO MID-15TH CENTURIES

Abstract: *The article examines the mutual influence of elites and political traditions of the Grand Duchy of Moscow and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL), as well as the dynamics of relations between the two states in the XIV–XV centuries. Referring, inter alia, to the prerevolutionary Russian historiography, the author points to Russian origins of GDL (unreasonably neglected since Soviet times) and to half-forgotten “Lithuanian” projections of medieval Russian history. At the turn of the 14–15th centuries, Moscow and Lithuania were leading the “gathering of lands” in the vast space of the East Slavic world, which allows us to speak not so much of their rivalry in this period as of cooperation. The mutually beneficial dynastic alliance of Vitovt and Vassily I determined the political history of the western and northeastern Rus’ for several decades to come.*

Keywords: *Grand Duchy of Lithuania, GDL, Grand Duchy of Moscow, Russian statehood, Vitovt, Vasily I, Vasily II.*

Ekaterina LABETSKAYA

THE ARCTIC: THE END OF AN ALLUSION, OR THE WHITE SILENCE OF HYBRID WAR

Abstract. *The events of 2022 have definitively dispelled the myth of a conflict-free Arctic. The demarches by the other seven members of the Arctic Council (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the United States), preventing the implementation of the Russian chairmanship program, hardly leave any doubt that the Arctic is being turned into an area of hybrid war against Russia.*

We owe the allusion of the White Silence to the famous story of the same name by Jack London, together with his other works about life in high latitudes. Their leitmotif is that the Arctic does not forgive laxity. The modern Arctic (Transarctic) in all its multifaceted nature will not forgive mankind for laxity and for disturbing the fragile balance of the Circumpolar World, with its almost four million inhabitants. The author uses a spatial and system approach as well as case studies of the Trans-Arctic for the fullest understanding of its realities. Particular attention is given to the activities of a quasi-governing body, the Arctic Council, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2021.

Keywords: *Arctic/ Transarctic, Arctic Council, Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF), security, geopolitics, hybrid war, globalization, sanctions, Barents Euro Arctic Council (BEAC), strategic planning, Russia, NATO, USA.*

Natalia TRAVKINA, Vladimir VASILIEV**MICROAGGRESSION —
AN EMERGING MATRIX OF SOCIAL RELATIONS IN AMERICAN SOCIETY**

Abstract. *The civilizational opposition between East and West, Russia and the “collective West”, and especially the confrontation between two nuclear superpowers, Russia and the United States, prompts us to look at this geopolitical division from the perspective of its origins and root causes. The system of ideological and political coordinates of the Russian-American relations is dominated by the stereotypical perception that this confrontation has had a top-down orientation, reflecting an acute conflict of interests between the ruling circles of both countries. Meanwhile, the general population does not have clear and long-term anti-American/anti-Russian beliefs, so, in this pattern, value contradictions are diminishing from the top to the bottom. However, fundamental shifts in the racial/ethnic composition of American society over the past 30-40 years have led to persistent and explosive tensions within the United States. In this context, Russian-American civilizational opposition increasingly conforms to a bottom-up pattern in which “microaggressions” of social groups and new ideological movements become a significant factor in Washington’s foreign policy aggressiveness.*

Keywords: *United States, microaggression(s), racial and ethnic shifts, hate culture, systemic racism, discrimination, psychological stereotypes, foreign policy aggressiveness, Russophobia.*

Vladimir VASILIEV**RUSSIA AND AMERICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY:
THE LOGIC OF CIVILIZATIONAL CLASH**

Abstract. *Russian-American relations are analyzed in a retrospective historical context seen as a process of progressive rapprochement of two civilizations, beginning with the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1807. The initial stages of rapprochement were largely marked by an illusory perception based on the idea of two Christian nations highly similar “in spirit”. However, in the 20th century, the polarity between American and Soviet political and economic systems resulted in sharpest forms of confrontation, up to balancing, in some periods, “on the brink of a nuclear war”. The collapse of the USSR in 1991 prompted euphoric expectations for rapid convergence between Russian and American societies. However, the euphoria quickly vanished as these “spiritual cores” of two types of civilizational development began to interpenetrate. The consistent historical process of Russia and America converging along the axis “civilizational periphery — civilizational core” revealed a fundamental opposition and even an antagonism of their civilizational “genetic codes”. Given the imbalances in geopolitical and geo-economic power over the past 30 years, the objective pattern of Russian-American relations has been a relationship between the “imperial center” and a “colonial periphery”.*

Keywords: *Russian-American relations, Russia, USA, diplomatic relations, civilizational interactions, civilizational clash.*

Petr YAKOVLEV

RUSSIAN ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF A CHANGING WORLD ORDER: CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

Abstract. *Russia is experiencing an unusual economic crisis, which differs in many ways from previous economic troubles and is highly contradictory in character. According to available estimates, Russia's GDP will decrease by a maximum of 3% by the end of 2022, which is far better than alarmist forecasts. In this regard, many experts note that the Russian economy has been demonstrating "amazing stability" in crisis conditions. At the same time, it has been segmented into winners and losers. Its weaknesses include falling capital investments and shrinking real income of the population. As a result, on the one hand, the supply of goods and services is decreasing, while, on the other hand, consumer demand is reducing and the domestic market is shrinking. To respond to these serious challenges implies proposing a new model of economic growth capable of putting the Russian economy on a sustainable development track.*

Keywords: *Russia, globalization crisis, world order, conflict with the collective West, raw material orientation of exports, technological gap, Ukrainian crisis, Special military operation, anti-Russian sanctions, macroeconomic changes, search for a new growth model.*

Nailya YAKOVLEVA

NATO AFTER THE MADRID SUMMIT (TO THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF SPAIN'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE)

Abstract. *The 36th NATO Summit, held in Madrid to mark the 40th anniversary of Spain's membership in the North Atlantic Alliance, has become the starting point of a new chapter in the bloc's history. The new Strategic Concept adopted at the Madrid meeting defined the guidelines for NATO's response to the ongoing change in the world order and reflected the challenges of an escalation between the Alliance and Russia unseen since the Cold War. Henceforth, NATO's key decisions and actions are subordinated to the task to counter Moscow's policies and to provide military and other assistance to Kiev. As a result, all members of the Alliance, including Spain, have been involved in the armed conflict in Ukraine, in one way or another. The Spanish example shows that this involvement can turn against the fundamental interests of European states and exacerbate existing socio-economic problems.*

Keywords: *North Atlantic Alliance, summits, Spain, international tensions, Russia-Ukraine crisis, NATO's involvement, growth of military spending, social and economic consequences.*

Ladislav ZEMÁNEK

PERESTROIKA OR KATASTROIKA? THE RADICALISATION OF THE CZECH LIBERAL POLICIES IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Abstract: *The article addresses the restructuring of Czech foreign policy since December 2021. The author draws attention to the historical background of this process, as well as to the role of the current geopolitical agenda. The ruling liberal-democratic coalition is pursuing a radical Atlanticist policy, trying to make the Czech Republic one of the centres of the „free“, „democratic“ world in opposition to „autocracies“. The current cabinet is striving to be recognised as the leading actor in the global enforcement of the Western conception of human rights. This could lead to such radical steps as provoking a coup in Belarus and Russia, withdrawing from the 16+1 mechanism, or recognising Taiwan as an independent state. The radical restructuring is underway despite the fact that most Czechs do not consider their country a geopolitical or civilisational part of the West. Therefore, the article pays attention to the growing attempts to formulate an autonomous policy based on a peculiar Central European identity.*

Keywords: *Czech Republic, US, China, Taiwan, Belarus, Ukraine, foreign policy, human rights, Central Europe.*