Abstracts and Keywords

Vladimir VASILIEV

MYTHOLOGIZING US HISTORY. I. "AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM" AND "MANIFEST DESTINY"

Abstract. *This article analyzes contemporary trends in U.S. historiography, demonstrating how a broader methodological crisis has catalyzed the rise of narrativism. Discussions around Francis Fukuyama's «end of history» thesis have led to a critical reassessment of historical objectivity and interpretive frameworks. Drawing on classical imagery, the author evaluates the concepts of historical cyclicity and highlights the foundational cultural influence of Ancient Greece and Rome on American statehood. Furthermore, the paper examines key mythologemes—specifically «American exceptionalism,» the «city upon a hill,» and «Manifest Destiny»—as core components of U.S. civil religion and national identity.*

Keywords: *US historiography, narrativism, mythologemes, Francis Fukuyama, end of history, American exceptionalism, city upon a hill, Manifest Destiny, Clio, historical cyclicity.*

Farhad IBRAGIMOV

THE MECCA AGREEMENT AS A CATALYST FOR A MULTIPOLAR SECURITY ARCHITECTURE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Abstract. *This article examines the Mecca Joint Defense Agreement, signed on August 7, 2026, by Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan. The author analyzes the prerequisites for the emergence of this new format, the strategic interests of its participants, and the agreement's potential impact on the regional balance of power. The Mecca Agreement could serve as a foundational pillar of an emerging multipolar security architecture, provided that its operational mechanisms are fully institutionalized and the alliance remains open to new partners. Its significance lies not only in formalizing the principle of collective defense but also in the desire of regional powers to diversify their security partnerships and reduce reliance on external guarantors. However, the lack of a publicly available treaty text, combined with ambiguous decision-making procedures and diverging strategic priorities among the member states, indicates that this new format cannot yet be classified as an established, fully operational military-political bloc.*

Keywords: *Mecca Agreement, Middle East, regional security, multipolarity, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, collective defense.*

Nikolay KALASHNIKOV, Lyudmila NIKOLAEVA

TRANSFORMATIONS IN CUBA AND THE US FACTOR

Abstract. *This article analyzes contemporary socio-economic transformations in Cuba against the backdrop of U.S. influence. The authors examine the direct relationship between domestic reforms implemented by the Cuban leadership and shifting Washington-Havana dynamics. Specifically, the study tracks the evolution of the Cuban socialist model following the adoption of the 2019 Constitution, including the expansion of private entrepreneurship, welcoming foreign capital, currency reform, and subsequent crisis-driven adaptations. Particular attention is paid to the mechanisms of economic pressure under the U.S. sanctions regime. Ultimately, the paper argues that while Havana is actively restructuring its model to adapt to modern international conditions, U.S. policy remains the primary external constraint limiting the efficacy of these domestic reforms.*

Keywords: *Cuba, the United States, sanctions, transformation phases, economic reforms, state regulation, energy blockade.*

Anton KRUTIKOV

THE MEMOIRS OF MAURIZIO MARSENGO: ITALIAN MILITARY REPRESENTATIVE AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE SUPREME COMMANDER (1915–1917)

Abstract. *This study analyzes the little-known wartime memoirs of Maurizio Marsengo, who served as the Italian military representative at the Russian Stavka (the Headquarters of the Supreme Commander) during the First World War. Stationed at the strategic center of the Russian military administration, Major Marsengo had an important insight into key operations of the Great War on the Eastern Front, as well as the profound upheavals of the Russian Revolution. From the moment of his arrival in Russia, he was immersed in an atmosphere of escalating political crisis within the military and civilian elites of the Russian Empire. In his memoirs, published in interwar Italy, Marsengo recorded the events of the February Revolution in detail and offered his personal analysis of the causes behind the revolutionary catastrophe. A defining feature of this historical source is the author's distinct analytical lens, shaped by his perspective as a monarchist and conservative officer deeply devoted to the House of Savoy and the principles of political legitimism.*

Keywords: *Italy, Russian Empire, Emperor Nicholas II, Maurizio Marsengo, Stavka, World War I, Brusilov Offensive, Russian Revolution.*

Alexey SHTRYKOV

POST-AMERICAN IRAQ: SCENARIOS OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POWER STRUGGLES AND RISKS OF REGIONAL DESTABILIZATION

Abstract. *This article analyzes the domestic and international consequences of the U.S. military withdrawal from Iraq, completed in September 2026. Particular attention is paid to the role of Iraqi Shia militias and their relations with the official state authorities, alongside the competing geopolitical strategies of key external actors. The study posits that Washington may have conceptualized this withdrawal as part of a broader strategy aimed at regional destabilization to intensify pressure on Iran. Given the persistent sectarian fractures within Iraq and the wider Middle East, the author underscores the critical risk of extremist networks reemerging, potentially capitalizing on established logistical channels and illicit arms supply chains.*

Keywords: *Iraq, Iran, Turkey, U.S. military withdrawal, sectarian tension, extremism, militias, American strategy, Middle Eastern destabilization, illicit arms trade.*

Alexey SHTRYKOV

THE EVOLUTION OF THE YEMENI CRISIS: THE ORIGINS, LOGIC, AND STRATEGIC CALCULUS OF THE ANSAR ALLAH MOVEMENT

Abstract. *In September 2026, Ansar Allah (the Houthis) established control over the entire Yemeni Red Sea coast and Perim Island, tightening the blockade of the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait for Israeli and Saudi vessels. This article traces the evolution of the Yemeni crisis from a local Zaydi community protest against Salafisation and financial discrimination to Ansar Allah's emergence as a pivotal military-strategic actor on the Arabian Peninsula. Challenging the predominant Western narrative that frames the Houthis merely as an Iranian proxy, the author highlights Ansar Allah's distinct political agency, shaped by the local historical and sociopolitical dynamics. The movement's asymmetric operations and control over the strait are evaluated as strategic leverage employed to compel Riyadh to exit the conflict by withdrawing support from the Presidential Leadership Council. An analysis of the regional security architecture reveals the limited efficacy of direct US military pressure and the inability of emerging alliances (including the "Mecca Pact") to provide Saudi Arabia with robust military assistance against the Yemeni insurgents.*

Keywords: *Yemen, Houthis, Ansar Allah, Ali Abdullah Saleh, Hussein al-Houthi, asymmetric warfare, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Red Sea, Mecca Joint Defence Agreement, Zaydism, Salafism.*

Marina TKACHENKO

THE DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR IN CHINA'S ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Abstract: *The several decades that have passed since the launch of the reform and opening-up policy have clearly demonstrated the significant role of demographic factors — and, above all, the availability of a large, growing, and low-cost labor force — in China's economic development. Today, with its labor supply dwindling, China is transforming into a country where prosperity increasingly depends on how efficiently it utilizes its human resources. Therefore, the demographic decline in China should be viewed not merely as a social problem but as a structural economic factor. Demographics will largely determine whether China can sustain high growth rates and build a fundamentally new model of economic prosperity.*

Keywords: *China, PRC, depopulation, demographic crisis, aging population, labor productivity, digitalization, silver economy.*