

International Affairs: Summary №3, 2014



200 Years of Diplomatic Relations Between Russia and Switzerland

His Excellency Mr. Didier Burkhalter, President of the Swiss Confederation and Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs



DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

Please accept my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the two hundredth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Russian Federation and the Swiss Confederation. Concerning today, we note with satisfaction that Russo-Swiss relations have advanced to a qualitatively new level of partnership, typified by intensive political contacts, along with those between parliaments and between departments, by active collaboration in the international arena and by consistently

deepening cooperation in the most diverse fields.

We stand ready to maintain and build on this momentum, and we reaffirm our determination to further the constructive dialogue with Bern in a spirit of mutual respect and consideration for each other's interests, to the benefit of the peoples of our countries and for the reinforcement of stability and security in Europe.

Sergey Lavrov

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Moscow, March 6, 2014

His Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

HONORABLE MR. MINISTER

The 200 years of diplomatic relations between Russia and Switzerland is an example of effective, peaceful and mutually enriching cooperation between two, in many ways different, states.

I am glad that specifically this year, which will be marked by an array of commemorative events in Russia and Switzerland, an opportunity has arisen for me to contribute, together with you, to the further deepening of relations between our countries.

With the best of wishes,

Didier Burkhalter

President of the Swiss Confederation, Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

Bern, March 6, 2014

Great Optimism About the Future of Russian-Swiss Relations

Author: D. Lyubinsky

Director, Third European Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Mr. Lyubinsky was interviewed by ITAR-TASS.



Like most jubilee dates, the bicentennial of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and Switzerland is above all a good occasion to look back at the way covered by our countries, recall our common historical past and make an attempt to understand its lessons. The jubilee is designed to become a kind of a landmark in our relations and help us to sum up the intermediary results of our cooperation in various fields and map out plans for the future. The jubilee year serves as a good stimulus for the continuation of

active political contacts as we are now working on a coordination schedule for them. It is important that both we and our partners are looking with great optimism to the future of Russian-Swiss relations.

In addition to the aforementioned policy of neutrality, Switzerland's distinguishing feature is an effective system of direct democracy. The Swiss experience of the successful building of a national economic model is also of interest to us. Although it does not have rich natural resources, the country maintains world leadership by competitiveness.

We have a large number of factors in common. We share common civilizational values; the political structure of our countries is based on principles of federalism; our approaches in international affairs are similar. We have created a sound foundation of political, trade and economic, scientific, cultural and human contacts, characterized by principles of mutual respect and equal partnership. In recent years, Russian-Swiss relations have attained a new qualitative level. The state visit by the president of the Russian Federation to Switzerland in September 2009, the first in history, became a landmark event, providing an additional impulse to the deepening of our cooperation along all lines, including high technology and innovation. The diversified, constantly developing legal, treaty-based foundation is evidence of our expanding and strengthening ties. Our interparliamentary and interagency contacts are developing at an intensive pace.

Russia is committed to constructive cooperation with Bern during Switzerland's OSCE chairmanship. We are acting on the premise that our Swiss colleagues will follow an objective and balanced course.

It is not so important for us what formal status the activities within the framework of the Culture Seasons will have - nationwide or regional. What is far more important is to ensure the maximum broad scope, introduce the largest possible number of Swiss citizens to the diversity of Russian culture and, from a broader perspective, to Russia itself-its traditions and customs, the actual state of things in the country and its position on the fundamental issues of domestic and international policy. After all, Russia's image through the prism of Swiss media is still far from objectivity.

Ukraine Between Russia and Europe

Author: E. Iljin

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HAVING BECOME AN INDEPENDENT STATE in 1991, Ukraine faced a multitude of challenges in its foreign and domestic policy. Among them were the shaping of its own economy, cultural and ethnic self-determination, the building of relations with other nations, and finding its own place in the world arena. The Ukrainian leadership has failed in meeting these challenges. During the last 24 years, prerequisites for a political and economic crisis in the country were piling up. In February 2014, with the

connivance of pro-Western forces, the legitimate government was overthrown in a coup. Today, Ukraine is in the grip of a total breakdown of law and order. The state system has been virtually destroyed and the legitimacy of the new regime is doubtful, to put it diplomatically. One cannot rule out imminent economic catastrophe and the splitting of the former Soviet republic into separate parts based on the ethnic, religious and ideological principles.

BILATERAL COOPERATION is objectively beneficial both for Russia and Ukraine because the two states have very close economic, historical, cultural and ethnic ties.

For centuries, both countries constituted a single economic complex; this complex was harmed by the collapse of the USSR. These ties became especially strong in the 20th century after the industrialization campaign. Many Ukrainian factories manufacture components for products made in Russia. These manufacturers are doomed to extinction without cooperation with Russia's producers. The viability of Ukraine's industry directly depends on the level of Russian-Ukrainian relations.

Integration into the EU would disrupt cooperation between Russian and Ukrainian enterprises. Russia would have to raise trade barriers to imports of European goods. It would have to revise its policy with regard to gas. In the short term, Ukraine would face colossal losses. When the seeds of European integration would sprout in Ukraine is a matter of conjecture. Who would reap the benefits, if any, is an open question.

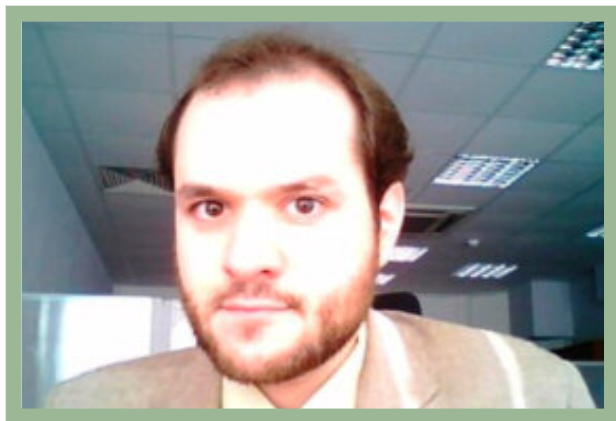
To be with Russia and with Europe is a choice to be made independently by Ukraine. Russia's policy plays an important role in this question. It is important for Russia to have Ukraine as an economically strong, friendly and stable neighbor. Instead of demagoguery and romantic dreams about Europe, one should demonstrate to Ukrainians the real plusses and minuses of European and Eurasian integration. It is extremely important to debunk the myth cultivated in Ukraine about a "threat from the East."

If the different groups of Ukraine's population reach understanding, Ukraine would have the possibility to stabilize the situation and, in time, embark on the path of economic growth. If the multi-vectored policy chaos gets finally ended, if Ukraine comes up with an effective policy independent from external players, it would most certainly become a politically and economically strong power and attain an adequate living standard for their citizens.

Maidan: A Lesson to Be Learned

Author: V. Surguladze

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IN UKRAINE, the West demonstrated once more the efficiency of its organizational weapon and its skill in pushing states into military operations of low intensity. There is still hope that unlike Serbia, Iraq, Libya, etc. Ukraine will not degenerate into another textbook study-case and a tick in the appropriate box in the list of successes of Western political technologists and experts in political coups and "protection of democracy."

While watching what is going on in Ukraine we should demonstrate the strength of spirit and a morally healthy social atmosphere so that to stand opposed to Western ideological attacks and to develop our state, rationally and consistently. Without this, it is impossible to survive in the world where certain countries have mastered the skills of disguising their destructive foreign policy aims with high-sounding phrases about common good and "human values and freedoms" which they distort beyond recognition.

The Ukrainian developments showed the world that the West continues thinking in the terms of "unipolarity" and is prepared to violate international law and push aside the ideas of good and evil shared by mankind. It uses network structures, NGOs and all sorts of charities to efficiently destabilize the situation in individual countries; to brainwash and mobilize their populations; select passionate and confirmed fanatics to form the core of those who know what they want and are ready to raise the masses to achieve this.

In Ukraine, the West is moving along the well-treaded path: history, culture and people are ignored while the warped interpretation of democracy and common human values are imposed with fire and sword.

THE CURRENT international tension means that Russian society should become more mobilized and should move away from the corrupting values of mass consumption. The Olympic triumphs in Sochi and the Ukrainian developments will force Russian big business and the state to close ranks and concentrate at the country's progress. Today, we need patriotism; all citizens should become aware of their responsibility for their country.

The recent social transformations in the West and the events in Ukraine mean that Western experience should be treated in Russia as an example of what should be avoided. Russia's traditionalism gives it a chance to survive as a society and a state. An aggressive propaganda of the rights of all sorts of minorities at the expense of the rights of the majority is unacceptable in Russia.

Reunification with Crimea was enforced on Russia by an unprecedented Western pressure on Ukraine; it was a triumph of justice and Russia's moral victory. Russia could not evade its historical mission of the pivot state of the Russian Orthodox civilization and it fulfilled this mission with honor.

Ukraine and the War of Aid

Author: Igor Pellicciari

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I WOULD LIKE TO OFFER A KEY of understanding in a wider international context of the Ukrainian crisis that has so far provoked a river of words in the West - more often comments than explanations - on what was happening first in Kiev and then in Crimea.

Apart from the warmongering rhetoric the only real War that we were witnessing until now is the one between the competing proposals and initiatives of Aid to Ukraine coming from Russia, European Union and USA respectively.

This phenomenon shows once again that international relations and power policies among States are progressively and now more than ever before relying on the policies and programmes of Aid and Assistance.

Surpassing the traditional tools of War and Trade - which have been inspiring for centuries the system of international relations - Aid policies during last decades became one of the newest and most sophisticated ways of international domination and control among States.

Thus it is clear - considering the extreme competition with no holds barred in which the offerers of Aid are involved - that the Donors have stronger political motivations than Beneficiaries themselves.

During the present-day European crisis, this constitutes an impracticable prospective considering that the European Union remains substantially divided on this particular topic with Germany showing much more cautious and less severe attitude towards Moscow in consideration of strong osmotic commercial ties between both countries and an entrenched habit of mutual contacts. It is commonplace that nobody in Europe knows about Russians more than Germans.

This is the reason why the European Union, lost in the throes of the War of Aid, has no other choice but to embrace the rhetoric of Europeism of the most traditional ideological flavor, which at this point in time is poorly digested even by the majority of the Western public opinions, tired of strongly formalized procedures and expensive bureaucracies in Brussels.

The contradictions in such strained interpretation of events are obvious and paradoxical.

While in Kiev the crowd protests in favor of an idea of European Union that unfortunately does not exist in reality, in the countries members of the European Union itself people hit the streets to protest against the existing institutions of the Union demanding its thorough reform if not dissolution and prepare to vote in a great number of anti-European political forces at the forthcoming European Parliament elections in May.

The Ukrainian Question and the West

Author: Robert Charvin

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NOT INFREQUENTLY, states or private structures push aside international law to go with their plans; it is retrieved from oblivion when one of the states finds it useful.

To promote their interests, some of the Western states are busy building up, behind the scenes, what can be described as common law to replace interstate agreements and the UN Charter as the main source of international law. They replace the basics of international law such as

the "fundamental principle of equal sovereignty of states" with a de facto hierarchy of the so-called democratic states on top and those which do not belong closer to the bottom.

The Ukrainian crisis and the riots in Kiev were mainly social: the rioters protested against bad governance by the president, the government and the parliament. Popular protests were saddled by West-funded trained professionals, neo-Nazi and neo-fascists of the Right Sector and the Svoboda Party. The Ukrainian crisis is but an element of global policy of pushing Russia aside and cutting short its ties with the neighboring Soviet successor-states. This policy is part of a wider project of blocking Russia's full-fledged return to the international arena, a natural right of any sovereign state.

Today, traditional anti-Russian rhetoric, the style and subjects of which have not changed since the Soviet times, has been enriched by the West, the U.S. and France in the first place, which accuse Russia of violations of Ukraine's domestic laws and international law.

The new people in Kiev, therefore, cannot insist on their legitimacy: they violated the basic principles of the country's Constitution. They are nothing more than de facto power despite the long-standing relations with the West.

There was not illegal Russian "intervention" in Crimea. The measures taken to keep the agreements observed (*pacta sunt servanda*)* in relation, in particular, to the Ukrainian army and to protect Russian and Russian-speaking civilians are fully justified by the developments in Kiev where legal power was replaced with an anti-Russian government.

The need to protect the civilians, one of the favorite arguments of the West and one of most frequently used justifications of armed interventions has been caused by the decisions passed by the new leaders which infringed on the interests of Russians and Russian speakers: the official status of the Russian language was annulled; discriminatory measures against those who speak Russian were taken; in Kiev and elsewhere in Ukraine Russians were attacked.

The Ukrainian crisis revealed the conceptual chaos and the legal muddle of international law. One cannot but be amazed that the West condemns Russia which relies on classical international law and operates with the legal arguments used by the West.

To rephrase what Barack Obama said about Russia, one can say that the West more and more often finds itself on "the wrong side of history."

Why Neo-Nazi Ideas Have Become "Mainstream" in Ukraine

Author: D. Babich

Foreign affairs correspondent



IN TODAY'S UKRAINE we have witnessed a change of the West's strategy in the struggle for influence in the post-Soviet space. We have also seen the failure of this new strategy immediately after that change.

The West has decisively abandoned the old taboos in choosing allies. It now admits neo-Nazis and ethnic nationalists into its circle.

In the current "battle for Ukraine," the West has discarded the conventionalities and has forgotten its criticism of the neo-Nazi party Svo-boda and of other radicals from Batkivshchyna and UDAR.

The West has declared war directly on the family of Yanukovich and on every individual somehow connected with him politically, along with their relatives. Even the young children of the "regionals" Tsarev, Arbuzov and Kolesnichenko are on the lustration list of the new Kiev authorities.

A quite Bolshevik approach: after all, those who ordered the murder of the Tsarevich purportedly aimed at the regime, not the boy.

There is the demand to give back to Ukraine the nuclear status it had. This is a stone thrown at the Western politicians and journalists who reproach Russia for the violation of the Budapest Agreement of 1994, under which, losing nuclear status, Ukraine acquired additional guarantees of sovereignty. They also claim, dubiously, that if Ukraine had then not given up its nuclear missiles, it would be today with Crimea.

There is no doubt that should nuclear missiles get into the hands of Tyahnyboks and Paribiys many people, not only Russians, would have to say goodbye to calm.

It looks like the West has put too much pressure in Ukraine. Too many population groups have been antagonized in the revolutionary new scheme drawn by the U.S. and EU. They include national minorities (Russians in the first place), officials (expropriation, jail and sanctions), the structure of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and many, many, many more...

Yet the art of politics is the art of creating a broad coalition. For this reason, nothing turns out all right for the new Kiev cabinet. A policy based on confrontation is doomed.

The OUN and Nazi Germany

Author: N. Platoshkin

Nikolai Platoshkin, Professor, Moscow University of the Humanities, Doctor of Science (History)



IN FEBRUARY 2014, Kiev was plunged into a nationalist coup d'état the striking force of which preferred to call itself the Right Sector to play down its Nazi overtones and historical association with Stepan Bandera even though billboards saying "Bandera will come to restore order" could be seen in many places of the Ukrainian capital with black-and-red flags of Bandera followers on some government buildings. Time has come to remind what Stepan Bandera in his time and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) meant by "order."

The OUN was a clandestine terrorist organization based on the ideology of the so-called "integral nationalism" formulated by Dmitry Dontsov, an émigré from Eastern Ukraine. This ideology treated the nation as an absolute value more important than individual lives and interests; it was integral, that is, present in all spheres of people's lives: the family, school, and workplace. Dontsov agreed with Hitler that the nations were engaged in the Darwinian survival struggle in which the victory went to the strongest. The future Ukrainian state was seen as a totalitarian construct: one nation-one party-one leader with unlimited powers. Other ethnic groups should be either forced to blend with the dominant nation or be expelled out of the country. The OUN program described "Hitlerism and Italian fascism" as "kindred movements."

All democratic countries should recognize the units of the OUN-UPA as criminal organizations, as has already been done with their patrons from the SS and SD.

After the victory, the Soviet army and security structures carried out large-scale military operations against nationalists in Western Ukraine.

The OUN-UPA was de facto rehabilitated in 1991 when Ukraine became independent; streets were named after Bandera, Shukhevich and their cronies; monuments were erected. In Western Ukraine, the UPA and "SS Halichina" veterans enjoy more privileges than the veterans of the Great Patriotic War. On the other side of the border, in Poland, the UPA is officially registered as a criminal organization.

In 1992, the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists (CUN) was established in Ukraine on the basis of the OUN; members of the Ukrainian National Assembly-Ukrainian People's Self-Defense (UNA-UNSO) describe themselves as ideological descendants of the UPA; they were actively involved in Chechnya on the side of the illegal armed formations.

In January 2010, in the last days of his presidency, Yushchenko made Bandera Hero of Ukraine which caused objections from President of Poland Lech Kaczyński, international Jewish organizations and the European Parliament. In April 2010, the Court of Donetsk annulled this decision causing great displeasure of Yulia Tymoshenko; she accused Viktor Yanukovich, new president of Ukraine, of repressions "against the heroes of Ukraine."

The Nuclear World as a Phenomenon of the Globalization Process

Authors: V. Annenkov, Professor, Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Doctor of Science (Military Sciences)

L. Kononov, Professor, Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, Doctor of Science (Political Sciences)



GLOBALIZATION is a multifaceted phenomenon. It encompasses the political, economic, informational, educational, and other spheres of human activity. Today, a sufficiently complete theoretical perception has been formed with regard to a large number of globalization aspects but there are some sides of it that require a systemic analysis. One of them is the nuclear sphere within the framework of which a threat to the existence of humankind on Earth may evolve.

As years passed, specific nuclear connections between states gradually began to emerge and strengthen. First, actions aimed at changing the condition of the nuclear forces of one state compelled other states to actively counter that by altering the status and capabilities of their nuclear. Second, accidents at nuclear industry enterprises, nuclear powered submarines, and the danger of accidental missile launches and the seizure of nuclear weapons by terrorist organizations have compelled countries to consolidate their efforts in order to prevent such events. As a result, mutual obligations and mutual assistance in dealing with nuclear problems have emerged.

Third, the technological dependence of states in the nuclear energy sphere is constantly growing. Some countries supply fuel and equipment for nuclear power stations, others only consume them, and still others reprocess nuclear waste. Consolidated activity of states and international differentiation of labor in the nuclear energy sector are strengthening the countries' nuclear dependence on one another.

In future, there is a risk of new military-political alliances appearing in the world that have coalition nuclear forces, which poses a certain danger to the international community.

Changes in the quantity and quality of nuclear world elements, nuclear connections and relations happening under the impact of internal and external factors lead to the transformation of the world, the alteration of its systemic properties.

In conclusion, the following needs to be said. The nuclear world with nuclear weapons and technology that existed previously has generated global nuclear threats and dangers about which quite a definitive perception has evolved in the world community.

The evolution of the nuclear world as a geopolitical system has transformed the global nuclear threats and dangers, which should become a subject of close analysis and consideration. This will help develop concrete proposals for the world community to eliminate them in the present conditions.

The European Union-Russia Relationship: Cooperation Is Necessary

Author: Jaap W. de Zwaan

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THE EUROPEAN UNION, its Member States, and the Russian Federation are geographically neighbours. We have a lot in common, such as parts of our history. We share the same values. We also have similar interests, economically, politically and security wise.

Yet, our relationship is not a good one. Economically there do exist intensive contacts, especially with regard to energy. In other domains, however, opportunities have not been exploited. Politically the relationship is relatively normal but not warm. Contacts between people certainly do exist, however it seems that our mutual relationship could be much more intensive.

The EU-Russian Federation framework offers a global and, one could argue, complete framework to base an intensive cooperation upon. Certainly so far positive developments have taken place on the basis of this framework. However, it seems that much more can be done.

SEEN FROM a Western point of view the way the rule of law generally speaking, and human and fundamental rights more particularly, are respected, applied and enforced in the Russian Federation, is often a source of irritation and criticism.

Apparently both sides are too proud and too sensitive to recognize the value and merits of the arguments of the other party.

IN CONFORMITY WITH the structure of the EU-Russia cooperation as it is organized at present, there are at least four global areas which lend themselves for an intensive cooperation between the European Union and the Russian Federation:

- a. Economic cooperation
- b. Foreign policy and defence
- c. Justice cooperation
- d. Education, research and culture

With regard to economic cooperation certainly progress has been made over the years.

By way of conclusion - and assuming that sufficient political will is present at both sides - it is argued that numerous interesting and promising perspectives do exist to enable the European Union and the Russian Federation to build further at a common and prosperous future for all citizens at the European continent.

Eurasian Integration as a New Developmental Paradigm for the Post-Soviet Space

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EURASIAN INTEGRATION is a natural and logical process of the evolution of post-Soviet states. The artificially broken economic skeleton of a previously united power is gradually fusing, and the inter-industry ligaments torn by political borders are beginning to heal, forming a solid basis for the harmonious development of the macro-region.

Although Eurasian integration is for the most part a set of economic processes, it has a number of rapidly developing political aspects, which are gaining

particular importance for the former Soviet republics.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, strong and ambitious players - the United States and the EU countries - appeared in the post-Soviet space. They aspired to the role of economic, political and ideological monopolists seeking to direct the development of states in the macro-region in order to serve their own national and geopolitical interests, usually without regard for the effects of such a "partnership." At the same time, an offer of "cooperation" on the terms of "you're either with us or against us" was nothing but the use of the well-known divide-and-rule method, at attempt to wrench these countries out of the political and economic community long established in this territory and to impose upon them relationships and obligations that were often artificial, inherently alien and disadvantageous to them. In contrast to Russia, not all states were objectively capable of standing up to such pressure and ensuring their right to sovereign domestic and foreign policy. As a result, these countries were faced not only with economic difficulties, but also with the problem of protecting their own national aspirations in their own region. This is why it becomes evident that the only way to overcome these difficulties is to combine the economic and political potentials or, in other words, to launch an integration process.

When speaking of the political component of Eurasian integration, of strengthening sovereignty, and of the destructive impact of extra-regional players, one should also mention Ukraine and its opportunities for participation in the CU/CES, although considering the tragic events in that country this question is now off the agenda, at least for the medium term.

Of course, the integration structures being created in the Eurasian space can exist even without Ukraine, but its membership would have increased the efficiency of the Eurasian Union and strengthened its cohesion and its political and economic might.

The historical paradigm of the Eurasian Union is that today we are witnessing the emergence of a new alternative, a new vector for the development of civilization based, along with economics and politics, on the most complex of all integration factors, a factor unique to countries of the post-Soviet space: friendship between peoples.

The North Korean Factor and Russia's Positions in Asia

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IN RECENT YEARS, Russia's active and highly vigorous foreign policy in many conflict zones has become an important international factor. In the hottest points (Syria being one of them) Russia achieved spectacular diplomatic results. There are, however, problem zones much closer to home. We have in mind the Korean Peninsula, the scene of the oldest and dangerous conflict.

It seems that the role of the Korean Peninsula in Russia's "turn to the East" policy and seeking firm positions in the dynamically developing APR, remains underestimated. Northeastern Asia is a gate which gives Russia an access to the APR; Korea is the key which opens the gate.

Strange as it may seem, Russia needs cooperation with North Korea as much as the North Koreans need Russia: the experience of the last 25 years has proved that they know how to achieve their aims without Moscow's support.

The Korean issue draws Moscow into regional and global problems of great importance for its own security and economic development of the ailing territories of the Russian Far East (the factor indispensable for the state's territorial integrity).

Today, the North Korean elite have reached the point at which they should formulate a new national idea to replace the already exhausted ideology of a "besieged fortress" and asceticism and egalitarianism for all (except the elite).

Moscow can start its relations with the Kim Jong-un team from scratch by offering friendship. This will move it closer to its strategic aim: multi-sided economic projects, settling the WMD problem and relieving military tension at its borders. This perfectly fits the 2013 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation which says:

Russia should remain firmly opposed to all attempts to keep the DPRK isolated and should insist on diplomatic settlement of all problems.

The bilateral format is not an end in itself; all international actors involved in the Korean settlement should be drawn into a wide "diplomatic offensive"; Russian experts should start thinking about an all-out effort to create a collective "roadmap."

The Future of BRICS as Seen by Experts

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THE MEETING of BRICS leaders in Durban, South Africa, on March 27, 2013, completed the first cycle of BRICS summits - all participating countries had each hosted one Heads of State meeting on their soil. Over this five-year period, the members of the group managed to expand the areas of convergence of national interests, thus leading to a reinforcement of the status of BRICS as a significant inter-civilizational structure.

The Russian Federation's presidency of the group is an important platform for the realization of the politico-economic potential of the country in the international arena.

Current state of the four basic factors that have a determinant impact on the prospects for development of BRICS allows us to rank the probability of occurrence of the proposed scenarios to 2030.

The set of negative scenarios (1. "Breakup"; 2. "Formal Existence") appears unlikely to occur. Scenario number one assumes the lowest level of probability. A break-up of BRICS would not correspond to the strategic interests of member countries, and would be perceived as a foreign policy failure of the leadership of each country. The degradation of BRICS to a formal association would likewise be perceived as a failure of the leaders of the countries of the group, however, with a relatively less substantial negative connotation.

The "Inertia" scenario assumes the preservation of the current dynamics of the interaction without significant changes and is characterized by a fairly high level of probability.

The potential of ranking the proposed scenarios from the most probable to the least probable is noted:

1. Scenario number four, sub-scenario number 4.1 "BRICS as an alliance of reformers of the international economic and financial architecture";
2. Scenario number three, "Inertia";
3. Scenario number four, sub-scenario 4.2. "BRICS as an alliance of reformers of the system of international relations";
4. Scenario number two, "Formal Existence";
5. Scenario number five, "Intercivilizational Status";
6. Scenario number one, "Breakup."

Gerhard Schroeder: Man, Politician, Diplomat

Author: V. Vasiliev

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Gerhard Schroeder: Man, Politician, Diplomat (On the Occasion of His 70th Birthday).



GERHARD SCHROEDER occupies a special place among the most outstanding political figures of turn-of-the-century Europe. Now we cannot imagine without him the evolution of current Russian-German relations, the laying in them, as they now say, of the economic base, and the transformation of these relations into the backbone of a uniting Europe. As chancellor of the united Germany from 1998 to 2005, he became one of Willy Brandt's brightest "political grandchildren," who put into practice his ide-

ological legacy in the new political conditions.

The Russians have a special attitude to Gerhard Schroeder. He made a significant contribution to the development of the strategic partnership between the two countries in the most diverse fields, including trade and economic relations, energy dialogue, and interaction between civil societies. In his 1998 election campaign, he put farsighted emphasis on the importance of continued advancement of bilateral relations between the two major European powers, the imparting of momentum and quality to them and called for expanding areas of cooperation. Having watched him for a long time, I used to catch myself thinking that Schroeder was surely a man of word and action. Upon becoming chancellor of the united Germany, he endeavored to realize the opportunities for cooperation with the new Russia.

So who is he, Gerhard Schroeder, whom German media in 2003 named the reformer of the year? He made his way into big politics thanks to the opportunities that democratic Germany has to offer to talented, motivated young people. Gerhard was born on April 7, 1944 into an ordinary family, without a father, who died in Romania in 1944 "for Fuehrer, Fatherland and Reich," and experienced all the hardships of growing poor, and the harsh political competition one faces when seeking high public office. He developed his fighting qualities as a member of a youth football team, firmly grasping the rules of start in big politics. Among them, the chief ones were stamina and endurance, offensive, speedy attack, and a goal-scoring finish. Young Gerd realized that a serious politician simply had to be an educated man with a profession that allows the competent understanding of the everyday problems of working people, and the rendering of a just and fair verdict based solely on law.

Gerhard Schroeder made a significant contribution to the development of the strategic partnership between our countries in the most diverse fields, including trade and economic relations, energy dialogue, and interaction between civil societies.

I will add also that Schroeder was a brilliant orator, able to excite party masses, and to carry them away with his arguments. The German media called him the "media chancellor" since he managed to find a common language with them as a sharp debater, generating intriguing ideas about the design of the future. But I will not romanticize his personality: Gerhard Schroeder like any politician was not devoid of ambition, vanity, and at times some arrogance and overconfidence.

On the 70th birthday of Gerhard Schroeder, I would like, on behalf of the Russian diplomats who knew him and worked with him, to wish him and his family health and happiness.

Trade Unions at the G20 Summit in St. Petersburg

Author: D. Grevtsova

Head of the Center for Research on Labor Unions and Protest Movements



In early September 2013, St. Petersburg hosted the "Big Twenty" summit where the Russian Federation was chairman for the first time in G20 history. Discussions on acute socio-economic issues were conducted in several thematic groups. The Labour 20 (L20) was one of such groups, representing the trade unions of the summit countries. It raised questions concerning protecting workers' rights and dealing with employment problems. L20 proposals were transmitted to the G20 leaders, ministers and sherpas, as well as taken into account by the business community. It was to the Russian trade unions, together with their foreign counterparts, that the right was given to submit the proposals for labor relations reform to the

labor ministers and heads of state of the Big Twenty group. All this underscores the important role of trade unions as an association encompassing most of the world's inhabitants in shaping the global agenda.

It is important to note that, half a year before the summit, the leadership of Japan's unions expressed concern with the information about altering the format of meetings. It was suggested that trade unions should be merged with noncommercial organizations under the aegis of the Civil 20, while abolishing the Labour 20 altogether. Apparently, an appeal to the leadership and the dissatisfaction of the world's unions with that decision preserved the L20 group, and so the initially conceived tripartite dialogue between labor, business and government at G20 summits.

Under Russia's presidency in 2013, an initiative was put forward to hold a joint meeting of the so-called social partners, Business 20 and Labour 20, with the G20 heads of corresponding agencies, in order to convey their common proposals into the final resolution of the summit.

The L20 priority topics were:

- Jobs for more growth;
- Restoring financial regulation and curbing speculation;
- Formalization of social protection floors (SPFs);
- Development through creation of jobs.

A result of the summit was the formation of a G20 Task Force on Employment to carry out permanent monitoring of the implementation of past agreements in order that countries' national commitments may be translated into real action at the level of governments.

The summit, and more specifically the L20, has revealed the different strategies of the world trade union movement in relation to the global decision-making centers. Led by the International Labour Organization, the moderates hope to adjust the anti-crisis strategy in labor's favor through dialogue. The more radical ones, led by the U.S. and German unions, do not want to legitimize by their presence the neoliberal model to deal with crisis as being obviously focused on corporate growth through the exploitation of labor.

The Banking Crisis in Cyprus

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THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS has not been left untouched by financial problems in the Eurozone. Its structural economic crisis, which had been brewing since 2009, paralyzed the banking sector and plunged the economy into pre-default in early 2013. Several reasons accounted for Cyprus being a breath away from financial disaster. First, the country had clearly lived beyond its means, spending more than it earned as shown most glaringly by its exorbitant public expenditure. The problem was not just a Cypriot phenomenon, all of Europe was sick with it.

There were, secondly, the speculative transactions in Greek bonds by leading Cypriot banks. After the write-down of Greek debt by Eurogroup's decision, the Cypriot banks lost a total of 4 billion Euros, and the country lost 24% of its GDP.

Third, the Cyprus economy was heavily offshore oriented. Nationwide, bank deposits totaled about 835% of GDP. The Cypriots were well aware that their GDP grew on the back of the "Russian money" and the money from international companies that duly paid taxes in Cyprus, rather than their own country. All this helped the Cyprus economy grow by leaps and bounds.

The fourth reason was political. It is no secret that Russia had, and continues to have, a significant influence in Cyprus. At the core of our relations with Cyprus are the long-standing friendship of two Orthodox peoples, shared cultural traditions, and the thousands-strong Russian-speaking diaspora which emerged here following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The strong Russian factor in the country which is a member of the European Union could not but annoy our Western "friends." The fact that a goal was set to oust Russia from this region of Mediterranean Europe is beyond doubt. What happened as a result in Cyprus was a well-planned action. As early as at the end of the tenure of the left government of President Demetris Christofias, the EU launched a campaign to discredit the Russia-Cyprus ties in the sphere of finance. Laundering the money of "Russian oligarchs" became the number one topic in the Western mass media.

There has to be adapting to the present-day realities. Previously, 80% of the Cypriot economy was focused on providing services in the banking sector and in the management of holding and investment companies. Now the share of these services in the GDP of Cyprus will dwindle down considerably. The country will have to look for new sources of income, to reorient existing businesses and to create new industries.

The goals facing the Cypriot leadership are ambitious. Time will tell to what extent these ambitions are realizable in existing political and economic conditions.

Turkey on the Threshold of a Difficult Choice

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THE EVENTS OF THE SUMMER of 2013 in Turkey - namely, the massive protests, as first glance, became a kind of a symptom of a political power crisis. However, that was only at first glance. The ongoing processes in the country are far more complex and contradictory than it might appear to an outsider.

The present course is comprised of conflicting tasks and goals. On the one hand, there is a strong desire to join the European Union and on the other, there are attempts to stake out claims to leadership in the Islamic world, at least in the Sunni part thereof. There is the

wish to remain a reliable ally of the United States in the region and the wooing of radical political groups in the Middle East. There is the wish to maintain internal stability and at the same time efforts to destabilize Turkey's neighbor, Syria. And it seems that Turkey's attempts to sit on two chairs are unlikely to strengthen the country's international positions and help resolve internal disagreements.

It seems that underlying both the country's domestic and foreign policy transformations are some deep-going processes of ideological reform - a process that has been in evidence for more than a decade now. Turkey has lived through several ideological "perestroikas" of that kind in its history, each of them affecting public consciousness, as well as domestic and foreign policy values. At one time, ideological transformation changed the fate of the Ottoman Empire and then later, of republican Turkey as well, also determining the fates of the peoples who were in some way or other under Turkish influence.

Any transformation has both its active proponents and opponents, covert and overt.

The role of ideology as a pivot in state building has always been high, both in the Ottoman Empire and in republican Turkey.

THE CURRENT PRIORITIES of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who is clearly undertaking some foreign policy innovations, include the striving to become the leader not only among the Muslim states that were previously part of the Ottoman Empire, which has come to be known as "neo-Ottomanism." At the same time, the Turkish prime minister is laying claim to Turkey's leading role in the Islamic world - at least an ideological role, which is quite in sync with the pan-Islamist aspirations of the late 19th century.

In the meantime, Erdogan is continuing the line toward the strengthening of relations between Turkic states, invigorating that activity within the framework of Turkic international organizations, along the lines of cultural collaboration and consolidating the interparliamentary structures of Turkic states and collaboration between their ministries and agencies. This line fits quite well into the ideology of pan-Turkism. At the same time, he is intensifying negotiations with the EU with an eye to entering this European organization while eclectically combining Islam and nationalism. Thus, Erdogan and his Foreign Minister Davutoglu are attempting to create a kind of foreign policy cocktail. The discrepancies between the diverse components of Erdogan's ideological platform are natural and they are hindering the formulation of a consistent policy line both at home and abroad. Time and the public mood will show how long this situation will last.

Françafrique: France on the Black Continent

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IN THEIR FIRST YEAR at school, French boys and girls learn and have to memorize the basic principles of their motherland "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité," which put in a nutshell the inalienable political and social rights of its citizens. France is a great country yet the Fifth Republic which respects these principles on its own territory pushes them aside when dealing with its former colonies and their populations.

President de Gaulle knew that in the postwar world France would not be able to preserve its vast colonial possessions intact and that soon it would be forced to recognize their independence. The de-colonizing discourse of American and Soviet diplomacy inspired the colonies. At home the left were growing increasingly aggressive with their demands to move

away from colonialist policies: France could not afford repetitions of its prewar mistakes; it had no choice but to satisfy the political aspirations of colonial peoples.

To a great extent Françafrique owes its longevity and impressive results to those African leaders who learned to capitalize on their countries' vassal dependence on France by manipulating the decisionmakers of the Fifth Republic.

FRANÇAFRIQUE complemented its intelligence and power structures with a network of informal political ties between political, financial, diplomatic and military circles of France and African states.

ON THE EVE of presidential election, Nicolas Sarkozy had announced that he was ready to move away from the unseemly political practices of Françafrique "to clean up his country's relationship with its former colonies." However, it was when Nicolas Sarkozy was in power that the presidential palace of Laurent Gbagbo in Côte d'Ivoire was taken by storm and French air bombings of Libya.

On October 13, 2012, speaking at the National Parliament of Senegal in Dakar President Hollande promised to "replace Françafrique with an approach based on equality, trust, and solidarity."⁵⁴ It turned out, however, that the military-strategic and economic interests of France outweighed the niceties of political rhetoric. French intervention on an invitation of the "appointed president" of Mali means that Françafrique is as alive as ever. Hollande's meddling in African internal affairs was driven by mendacious claims of supporting democracy and rule of law in former French colonies. The truth is: Africa has been and remains France's important raw material appendage with no comparable alternatives in sight.

A World Without Wars Program

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According to Immanuel Kant, mankind has just two alternatives: either to end all wars or to obtain perpetual peace only in the great graveyard of the human race after a war of extermination.

Evolution created another animal species, which defended their territory by scaring away newcomers of the same species. Nobel laureate Konrad Lorenz convincingly demonstrated that aggressive rivalry is a genetic instinct of human species. Superiority, subjugation, crippling or even death are the most natural responses of man confronted with other members

of the same species.

This is also typical of humans in power. Throughout their history, people created numerous ideological dogmas based on gender, racial, national, religious, political and material distinctions.

Civilized society can no longer tolerate the instinct of aggressive rivalry of "princes" (to borrow the term from Machiavelli) and the steadily growing efficiency of the weapons used. The present authors have accepted a different idea of the world in which, at the first stage, offensive weapons (means of delivery and destruction which destroy objects and kill people) are no longer produced and used; at the second stage, defensive weapons (means of delivery and destruction which destroy objects and means of scaring people away unharmed) are liquidated.

AFTER MILLENNIA OF WARS and two world wars, the world never expected to see Europe a territory without internal borders, without offensive weapons, without millions of deaths of those who worshiped different chimeras. The "princes" of European countries no longer order to kill people clad in different uniforms or loyal to different habits.

Today, very much as before one person (the ruler) is responsible for the fates of millions. Prosperity stemming from scientific and technical progress realized by people who provide foodstuffs, build housing and communications, cure illnesses, etc. made individual power of the ruler a rudiment of the past.

TO CURE THE STATE of its maladies, we should, first and foremost, do away with the situation in which political and especially secret decisionmaking belongs to one person or a narrow circle of his cronies.

The future generations are the force which will be able to change the hopeless future of the human population and discontinue production and use of weapons of destruction as means of defense.

Russians in Turkey: Eternal Memory, Forgotten Graves

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Doctor of Science (History)



RUSSIA'S PRESENCE in Turkey has a history of more than ten centuries. Merchants, sailors, actors, soldiers, artists, priests - in a word, many Russians of all descriptions left their mark on that country. Among the first Russians to have come to Turkey and made it their home for long spells were Russian diplomats who not only travelled across the vast possessions of the country but also spent months behind bars during numerous wars between Russia and Turkey.

It so happened that the biggest number of Russians fleeing their Homeland at the end of the Civil War landed on Turkish shores. About 260,000 military people and civilians, who disagreed with ideas of the revolution, found themselves in Istanbul where some of them stopped over on the way elsewhere while others made it their home. Many outstanding Russian cultural figures recorded their reminiscences of what their fellow émigrés experienced at that time.

The book by Irina Kasimova, member of Russia's Consulate General in Istanbul, "White Russian Émigrés in Istanbul's Neighborhood of Pera: Landmarks" (I. Kasimova. *Po mestam prebyvaniya beloy emigratsii v stambul'skom rayone Pera*. Istanbul, 2011, 84 pp.) gives us a unique glimpse of the post-WWI period in this posh district of Constantinople. It also housed the premises of the Russian Empire's embassy. It was where thousands of Russians dislodged by the revolution and civil war flocked to in 1919-1920. Archive documents provide precise numbers of people accommodated at the embassy dacha and the other embassy estates; they also contain lists of the names of those people.

The noble act of rebuilding the historical relic of course calls for further support by government and public organizations of Russia and Turkey. It should be mentioned that Russia's current ambassador to Turkey A.G. Karlov is being instrumental in exploring ways to include this historic landmark among destinations of interest to Russian tourists in Turkey (it is located near the existing tourist trail to Troy). Efforts are also on to keep the memorial in appropriate condition.

For long years, all these people represented a cross-section of Russian culture abroad. Musicians, artists, engineers, actors, and athletes made their mark on secular culture that emerged in Turkey. Most certainly they deserve being remembered for what they did on Turkish soil.

Relations between Russia and Turkey have a history of nearly 600 years. Wars and military conflicts between them constitute no longer than 30 years of this long historical period. The current period is seeing a growth of cooperation in all areas. It is no coincidence that while, in our troubled day and age, we see a wave of defiling Russian graves in many former Soviet republics, there are many instances of real care for the relics of past history and Russian graves in Turkey.

NATO's Bombing of Serbia: Fifteen Years After

Author: K. Kachalin

Foreign affairs correspondent



I RECENTLY RE-VISITED SERBIA on a business trip. As usual Belgrade is living its own modest life. The only pleasure Serbs have never denied themselves, and apparently will not ever give up, is a chat over a cup of coffee in the numerous and very cozy cafés. These are always crowded and noisy. Obviously, they mostly discuss personal problems and quietly grumble about local politicians not knowing how to take the country out of the economic crisis. At the same time, people are well aware that it all started not because of socialists or de-

mocrats. For 15 years now, they have been trying to bring Serbia out of the impasse into which the strong and powerful Europe drove them in March 1999.

In the spring of 1999, NATO countries and the United States (totaling a population of almost 600 million) brought their full military power to bear on the 10 million Serbs. An old friend of mine, a leading Serbian TV journalist, Milovan Drecun, told me about how and why that happened.

Milovan Drecun: There was no reason for the destruction of the bridges in Novi Sad from a military point of view. I do not rule out that NATO planned a ground operation against Serbia from the direction of Hungary and therefore they apparently decided to cut off the Yugoslav army from this part of our country. Still the main purpose of the bombing in the city of Novi Sad, I am just sure about that, was to spread fear and terror among the peaceful population of Vojvodina. Brussels planned to break the spirit of both the civilian population and the FRY army itself.

Children and youth received the biggest trauma from this war, which seriously affected their physical and mental well-being. We witness our nation's broken and impaired health. The water, air, forests are all poisoned. Now, 15 years later, we still feel the consequences. Furthermore, we Serbs have had a moral breakdown. We now can't actively resist American influence, the American invasion of our life.

NATO deliberately destroyed transformer substations, which contain quite a lot of perylene. This is a prohibited chemical, according to EU documents. It caused tremendous damage to the country's ecology.

The consequences of the use of depleted uranium showed themselves already after the aggression. In Kosovo and Metohija, the percentage of cancer among children soared up drastically.

Our soldiers and officers, those who fought in the Pristina Corps, a few years after the bombings died of different diseases - cancer of the blood, lung cancer, brain cancer. In the town of Aleksinac, where the peaceful population suffered the most, NATO planes had specifically bombed civilian targets, and it is there where the percentage of brain cancer cases increased by several times. Unfortunately, there is no concrete statistical analysis in this regard in Serbia.

Qatar: A Success Story

Author: V. Stobl

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THE WORLD lives under the banner of continuous development and renewal. But progress is uneven: while some countries and even regions are stagnating, others are showing strong growth and are engaged in comprehensive modernization. New poles of economic power are arising before our eyes, and modern technologies have come to form the basis for the development of recent pre-industrial societies.

Qatar, a small Arab emirate, - as shown in the book by Sergey Plekhanov "Looking to the Future: The Emir of

Qatar Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani" - has swiftly ascended to membership in the club of rich nations with high living standards, and the basis of that prosperity is its immense hydrocarbon reserves. Qatari companies, in collaboration with multinational corporations, developed the North Field, the world's largest single deposit of natural gas, which enabled the country to become a major global energy supplier.

It is often written today that the rise to fame of the Emirate and its Emir came on the back of the big money that flooded Qatar after it had turned into a gas giant. The author shows that the relationship is reverse. It was the big ambitions of Sheikh Hamad that determined his advent to power, and then the accelerated development of all aspects of life in Qatar. The main instrument of his influence in the Middle East, the Al Jazeera TV channel, had been created long before the gas saga came to a happy end. The author describes in detail the evolution of this unique media project.

The numerous sensations associated with the acquisition by Qatar's ruling family of well-known companies (or large parcels of their shares) like Volkswagen-Porsche, Saisbury's, Harrods, Miramax Films, Lloyds and Credit Suisse, and of the Everton and Paris Saint-Germain Football Clubs brought the small country's name onto the front pages of leading publications around the world.

All these sensational acquisitions did not cause any anxiety among the Emir's subjects, because they were made amidst a steady rise in living standards for the Qataris. For several years now, the Emirate has occupied first position in the list of richest countries by per capita GDP. It has been placed first in the world as an exporter of liquefied natural gas following closely behind Russia in the world's total gas production. Sergey Plekhanov shows that this development of events has been made possible not only because of Qatar's possession of natural resources, but also thanks to the sound political course pursued by the Emir Hamad bin Khalifa. The entire history of the eighteen-year reign of this extraordinary Arab monarch is a history of continuous success. Before our very eyes Qatar has made a breakthrough to the future - the same as Japan and the Asian Tigers had somewhat earlier. In all these cases, success has been underpinned by reasonable risk multiplied by perseverance and a clear understanding of objectives by the national leadership.

A Valuable Contribution to Clarifying the Status of the Arctic

*Authors: Yu. Maleev, Professor, Department of International Law, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation
A. Nagiyeva, Lecturer at the same Department*



IN THE LATE 20th and early 21st centuries, the problem of the Arctic became highly relevant and, at the same time, largely controversial, not only on a scholarly level but also in the practical policy of states as well as in international law. The reason for that are the opening new opportunities in the development of the Arctic resources (oil and natural gas on the continental shelf), the use of the Northern Sea Route and the fishing industry. This is happening amid acute political debate. It was not an accident that California State University Professor

O.R. Young entitled one of his publications on the issue "The future of the Arctic: cauldron of conflict or zone of peace?" Some Western countries are actively promoting the need for signing an Arctic treaty, by analogy with the Antarctic Treaty (1959).

In connection with the aforesaid, the Russian Council for International Affairs has in quite a timely way prepared a three-volume anthology, entitled "The Arctic Region: International Cooperation Issues." This publication considerably facilitates the effective development of the regulatory, legal, political, research and doctrinal material on the issue at hand in upholding Russia's corresponding interests.

Volume 1 is devoted to general matters of international partnership in the region in the context of the Russian interests in the Arctic. The foreword is written by A.N. Chilingarov, special representative of the Russian president for international cooperation in the Arctic and Antarctic.

Volume 2: International Cooperation Issues. Devoted to matters of transport and transport infrastructure (A.M. Fadeev, VS. Selin, A.B. Nikolaeva, M.V. Kortunova, V.V. Ruksha, AA. Smirnov, M.M. Kashka, and N.G. Babich).

As experts in international law who have read the publication under review justly point out, Volume 3, the most extensive, is of the utmost interest, providing texts of official documents, namely "Applicable Legal Sources."

Prof. A.N. Vylegzhanin, who wrote a thorough introductory article to this volume, notes that for the first time not only in domestic but also in world legal literature, it presents in a systematized form basic documents in international law, which, to use the author's term, define "the legal identity of the Arctic" as a special region on our planet.

Apart from other things, the publication under review is of considerable practical value as a reference aid and analysis for the further development of Russian political and legal studies of the Arctic. Yet, these three books are not an end but rather an invitation to further substantive research of the Arctic policy of states, to doctrinal assessments of the status of the Arctic taking into account the ongoing environment and economic changes there and at the same time the broad rights of the Arctic states that have historically evolved in this unique region.

On Geoff Dyer's Zona: Trying to Understand the Magic of Andrei Tarkovsky's Film

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On Geoff Dyer's Zona: Trying to Understand the Magic of Andrei Tarkovsky's Film (Unsent Letter to the Author)



DEAR GEOFF,

It was a genuine pleasure to read your Zona. Indeed, *The Stalker* disturbs, as do Christian truths. It may come as a shock therapy in that it makes people think of Life Questions. The reflection can produce different outcomes, none of them absolute or comprehensive. Since you invite comments, I dare share with you some ideas that hopefully will address some of the loose ends of your narrative. Your essay is primarily about the impression Andrei Tarkovsky's

film makes. So, I'll try to keep to that ground which allows maximum freedom. I will not distinguish between what is subjective or objective, conscious or subconscious or just formative in respect of the film and its director's design.

YOU PURPOSELY leave religious beliefs outside your analysis. But those seem to be absolutely central to the very plot of *The Stalker*.

Both liberal capitalism and communism introduce a simplistic world of certainties, with the overarching idea of God's Kingdom on Earth as a real possibility. Without that, there would have been neither the Soviet Union nor the global empire of the West.

Our turn-of-the century philosopher and poet Vladimir Solovyov made this distinction between a life that happens to be and a life that ought to be, between the crude force of the existing and the spiritual faith in the truth and good. Like O. Spengler, he told civilization from culture. In his view, people of the fact live other people's life, but life is created by people of faith. For him, F. Dostoyevsky was the first author to preach a life that ought to be.

The powerful image of Malena (Monica Bellucci), when she returns to her town with her husband, proves this point: no dirt, she had had to go through, did stick to her. Her humanity and beauty prevail over a life that happens to be. Prince Myshkin says to Nastassya Filippovna: "You have emerged pure from such a hell."

The Silver Age of Russian poetry was also homage to the trend. But beyond that, as Alexander Blok and Anna Akhmatova prove, it helped preserve not only the precious little thing of culture, but also great spiritual values.

Maybe, the ultimate test of any claim to the truth is whether it strikes a chord with the mystery of our nature that we carry within us.

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